

A COLLECTION OF MASSES

OR: WEAVING A WORLD RECALLED

(A COLLAGE OF THINGS ONCE SEEN)

By

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Abstract:

“A Collection of Masses” serves as an introspective look at the visual inspiration and synthesis of a creative childhood, lifestyle, and culture. The writing serves as a personal history, detailing significant artists and works and the ways they served as influences. I was born into a family of artists. I grew up watching my mother paint and lived in a domestic space with art studio pockets throughout it. In our household we always made things and I find my working method most absorbed in that act of creativity and process. My masters thesis body of work revolves around *system relationships* drawing forms from a variety of systems; the human organ systems, crowd dynamics, and the systems with which artists create their work. It synthesizes ideas begun by artistic influences, and embraces artistic experimentation and creativity.

I grew up in an artistic family. I grew up watching my mother paint and lived in a domestic space with art studio pockets throughout it. In our household we always made things and I find my working method absorbed in that act of creativity. Paintings are a physical record of a specific moment in an artist's life, the colors and forms used change based on the season, location, and working environment. Artists linework can feel different based on the expressive energy they bring to it, so I embrace that opportunity to express my personality. My artwork follows this drive; focusing on abstracted forms, experimental collage and assemblage, and material texture. The imagery I work with varies, but can best be summarized as abstractions influenced by organic forms and *system relationships*. These *system relationships* I define as imagery and content which looks at the way shapes move, function, and fit together. Some examples I look towards are human organ systems, the imagery of crowds of people, cellular structures, environmental geometry, and the dynamic between artist, studio, gallery, and viewer. Texture is a crucial element in my work. When I see artwork, I am overtaken by a desire to touch the surface of work and feel the brushstrokes. This is how I want my viewers to feel, so I allow individuals to touch my artwork. Humans are incredibly tactile organisms and we formulate special relationships to objects through touch, I invite viewers to engage with my artwork in this traditionally “taboo” way.

My artistic influences begin with my family. Specifically my mother Kathryn Marohn Bartsch and grandmother Martha Holland Bartsch. As a child having the both of them as presences in my life played a role in directing me towards embracing the arts, further cementing us as an “arts family”. Growing up around working artists also shifted

my perception of the artist and the studio, especially since my mothers studio space was around us constantly. Seeing large paintings in process became a constant and the giving of organic feedback as works developed became the norm.

The best place to start when discussing my artistic influences is my mother Kathryn Marohn Bartsch, as she is the artist whose work I have spent the most time around and has been the most consistent artistic influence in my life. Her work has changed over the years, but gravitates towards adapting religious icon painting and Persian and medieval miniature paintings with old family photos. Many of the subjects in her works are friends and family from the past. Her works are very tactile, and generally incorporate processes of applying paints to be scraped away creating rough and tactile surfaces in a process of construction and deconstruction. The scraping away also serves as a method of introducing chance to her work. This process greatly influenced my early undergraduate works, and the consideration put into painted surface texture remains a fixture in my process. Her work explores the different feel of drawing and painting as artistic practices. She paints, then draws over the paintings, then paints over the drawings, then re-incorporates drawn linework in an alternating process to hybridize the media atop the surface. This is very similar to my own use of printmaking and drawing elements alongside painted surfaces.



(Photography of works provided by Kathryn Marohn Bartsch)

My Grandmother Martha Holland Bartsch has been a large influence in her own way. Her artistic career has shifted throughout the years, primarily moving between drawing, photography, and sculpture. Her early oceanic photography had some of the most lasting impact on me and my artistic practice. Growing up, visiting my grandparents meant my Grandmother would set up her slide projector and show her diving photos. To me as a child fascinated by biology particularly oceanic organisms (or as I would call them “swimmin guys”) this was always a time for celebration, and I would watch the reels over and over engrossed in the images. Because of her studio artist background these works are different from standard wildlife biology photos. They don't prioritize framing the organisms as the primary goal, and consider the textures and colors of the full photographic composition.



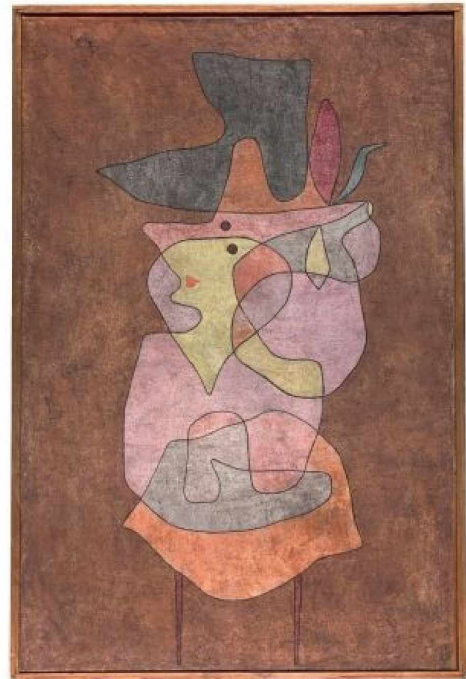


(Photographic works provided by Martha Holland Bartsch)

The forms and colors seen in her works had an impact on the way I saw the forms and colors of the world around me. Her eye for texture captures the tactile characteristic of the oceans flora and fauna, something I could not touch, but desperately wanted to experience firsthand. This tactile characteristic and the prevalence of vibrant reds, yellows, and pinks seen throughout coral reefs (particularly on nudibranch) still play a role in the forms in my own pieces.

The first artist I developed an attachment to seeing their works in museums was Paul Klee. As a three year old my mothers Klee books were marked by dinosaur stickers and crayon scrawled marks in the margins from my repeated viewing. In museums he was the artist I would beeline towards (and still do). His works are tactile and incorporate a mix of drawing and painting techniques, hybridizing the feel of both. His color palette has always been appealing as well. There is a playfulness in the works of Paul Klee, and a genuine love of art making visible in works like his puppets. His puppets were not originally intended as “artworks”, they were gifts to his nine year old son Felix. This has always reminded me of the family I grew up in, where we would make new toys and find any way to push a creative endeavor. Klee still plays a large role in my work, and through the course of working on my thesis work I have had more opportunities to see his work.

“Humor and Fantasy- The Berggruen Paul Klee Collection” ran at the Met Breuer from September 2016- January 2017 and I was lucky enough to see the works during that time. The roughly seventy works on display had an amazing degree of surface texture. There is a characteristic reminiscent of fading pastel and sanded paint surfaces often attained through Klee’s oil rubbing and transfers which I sought to replicate in my own works. I first attempted this as a high schooler, applying thick pastel and using sandpaper to remove pigment. Now I attain a similar effect by applying the paint itself using sand paper, and by using thin ink washes which can be wiped away.



(Paul Klee, "Actors Mask" 1924 (Left), "Dame Demon" 1935 (Right))



(Paul Klee, Puppets)

I became a painter when I first experiences Francis Bacon. I remember an assignment in my high school art class in which we were given a list of artists to choose from and learn about. I was encouraged to familiarize myself with the works of Bacon, and since then he has been a formative artist in regards to the development of my works. At first his work spoke to me in its painterly characteristics, areas of thick paint near thin oil washes of color. His color palette also had an early impact on me, and his colors still feature heavily. The biggest variation between his work and mine is the visceral gore visible in the majority of his painting. My goal has always been to navigate away from gory feeling pink and red forms, while Bacon's work tends to embrace it. Lately I have found myself looking at his triptychs and the way the pieces incorporate single forms in vague geometric spaces. As I gravitate away from busy abstractions filled with forms, and embrace more intentional single compositional forms I have adapted space in my work similarly to Bacon.



(Francis Bacon, "Second Version of Triptych 1944" 1988)



(Francis Bacon, "Three Studies For a Crucifixion" 1962)



(Francis Bacon's Studio)

Another way Bacon has influenced my work is through the photos of his studio. The cluttered and paint covered space he worked has affected the way I think about the relationship between artists and their studio spaces. In Bacon's studio I can see moments of his personality, which is something I find fascinating and seek to incorporate.

As a high school student I was required to undergo an internship within a career field of my choice. My mother introduced me to Duston Spear an artist who taught with her, and I was quickly made her intern studio assistant. Duston quickly brought me up to speed on the organization of her studio space, her artistic practice, and her body of work. I cleaned palette knives and brushes, stretched and gessoed canvas for her, and participated in structural exercises to inspire ideas (including a day of deconstructing and reconstructing a lawn chair). Following the internship Duston hired me full time as her studio assistant, and gave me greater responsibilities. I was sewing into canvases to set underlying textures to be painted over, and was present meeting buyers and curators who had come to view her work. Duston also got me started working in pinks, and utilizing acrylic gels to create surface textures prior to painting.



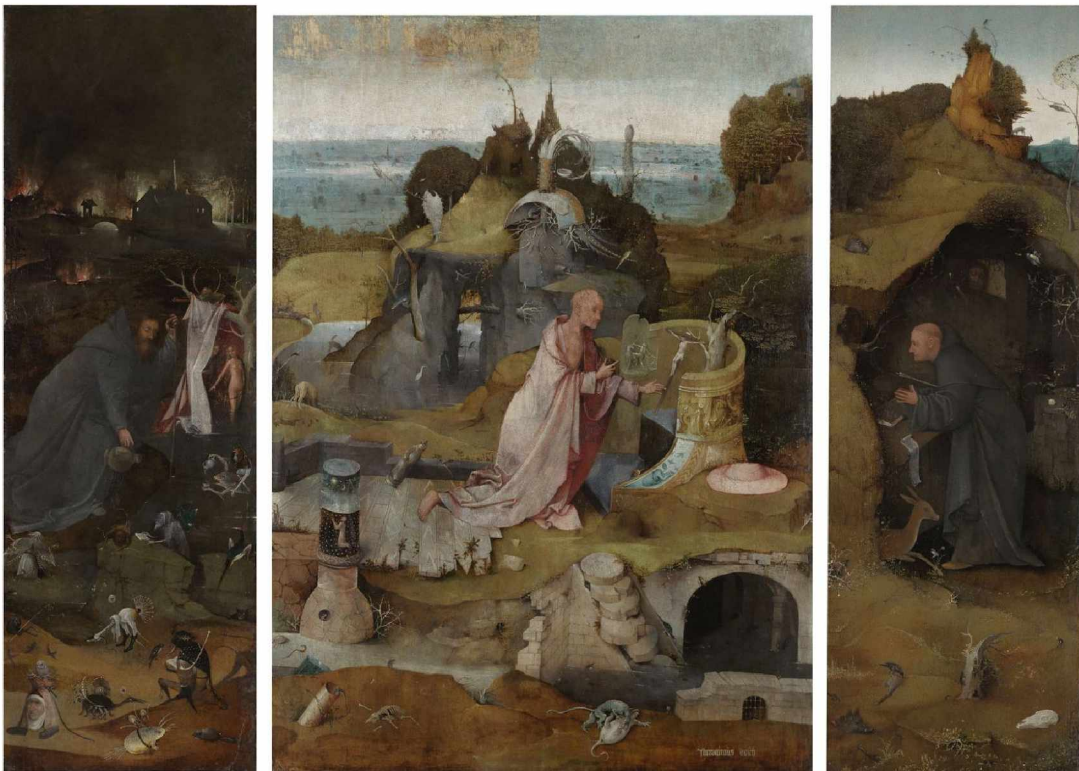
(Duston Spear, "White Noise" 2012)

Following my time with Duston, I was accepted to the University of Cincinnati's College of Design, Art, Architecture, and Planning (or DAAP) as a fine arts undergraduate student. My biggest artistic influence during this time was Jean-Michel Basquiat. Basquiat has remained a central inspiration to my work. I find his paint application and mark making dynamic and expressive, and filled with personality. This "personality behind mark making" mentality has been something I strive to accomplish in my own works. Basquiat's expressive hand atop at times unconventional surfaces like wooden screens and wooden pallets makes his work feel like objects, not just a worked surface. This object quality is something I have always strived to accomplish. His surfaces are also heavily worked and incorporate scraps and fabric pieces alongside thick expressive marks. This is what keeps bringing me back to him as an inspiration.



(Jean-Michel Basquiat, "LNAPRK" (Left), "Flexible" (Right))

The other influence I found myself looking at was the works of Hieronymus Bosch. Similarly to Basquiat, Bosch remains a central influence but for entirely different reasons. During this time as an undergraduate student I began drawing chimeric forms, hybridizing pieces from different animals and inanimate objects in the attempt of finding interesting forms to include in my works. This is what brought me to looking at the works of Bosch, and of older medieval manuscripts and maps. There is a lighthearted creativity and humor that can be found in the surreal and nonsensical medieval monstrosities I regularly find myself drawing. These figures are not as frequently found in my painting, but regularly appear in my drawings and prints. I have recently begun going back over images like these, in my attempts to make varied and similarly surreal forms and figures.



(Hieronymus Bosch, "The Hermit Saint Triptych" 1495-1505)



(Hieronymus Bosch, Hermit Saint Detail)



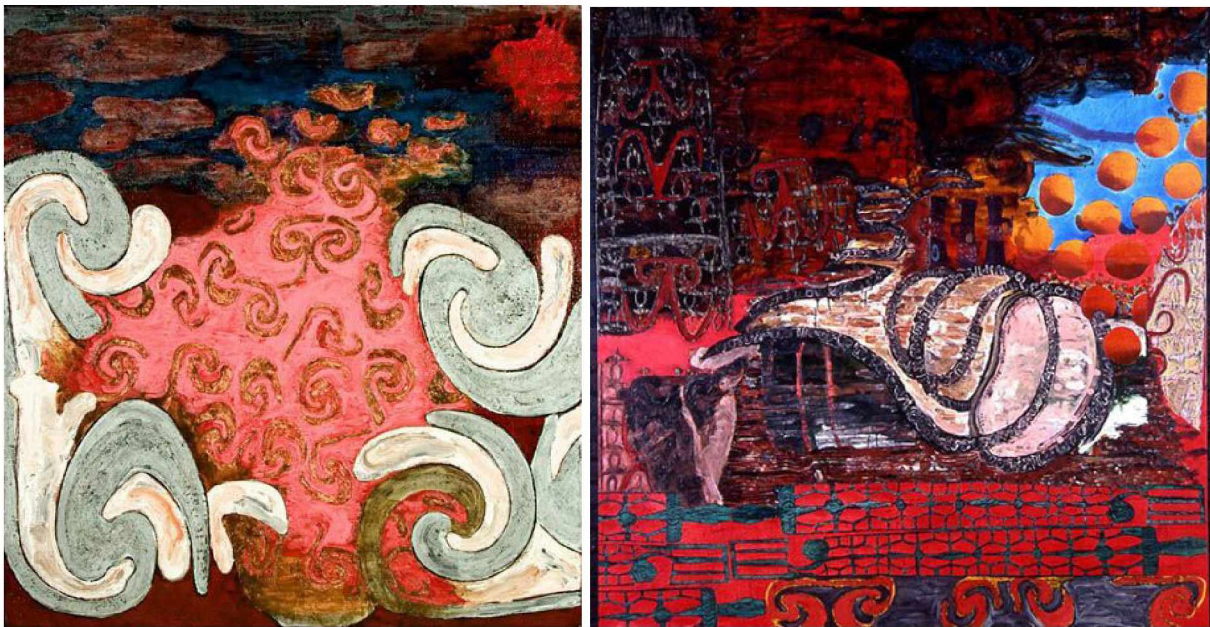
("Luttrell Psalter" and "Ste-Genevieve" Manuscript Imagery 14th Century)

As an undergraduate student at the University of Cincinnati my work focused on the gradual evolution of my creative process. Prior to developing a body of work I referenced and researched relative aspects of archaeology and anthropology, primarily experimenting with crude structural forms alongside expressive textural painting. I developed a process of layering wax and paint, then scraping away layers in a manner similar to my mother's work as a process of "digging" into the surface. This series became known as my "Archaeological Painting Series". While I had made symbolist, abstract works incorporating stylized line before, this series is what truly began steering me towards formal abstraction. I viewed myself as the interpreter of these new and surprising forms, and my role as an artist became to draw out the things I could see on the surface of my canvas.



("The Skeleton Wall" from Archaeological Painting Series 2012)

Following this archaeological series I began taking upper level painting classes, and working with the painting faculty including Frank Hermann. He began pushing me to push texture and material, and to put more thought into the abstractions I was making. His own work shared characteristics with what I wanted to be making, and he gave us plenty of opportunities to see his studio space and bodies of his own work. I was making painting assemblages during this time and began making pieces which would inspire the painting cube series present in my thesis work. Hermann got me thinking about expressionism, working in thicker paints and surfaces, including incorporating paints mixed with sand and sawdust to further push my surfaces.

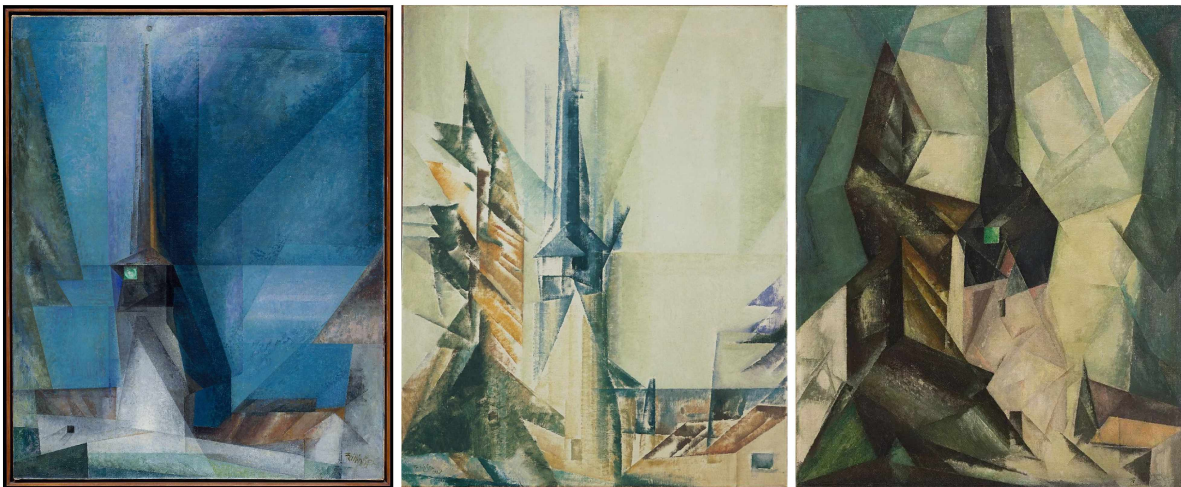


(Frank Hermann, "Yupmakcain Terrain III" 2005 (Left), "THINKING: The Origin of Motif" 2002 (Right))



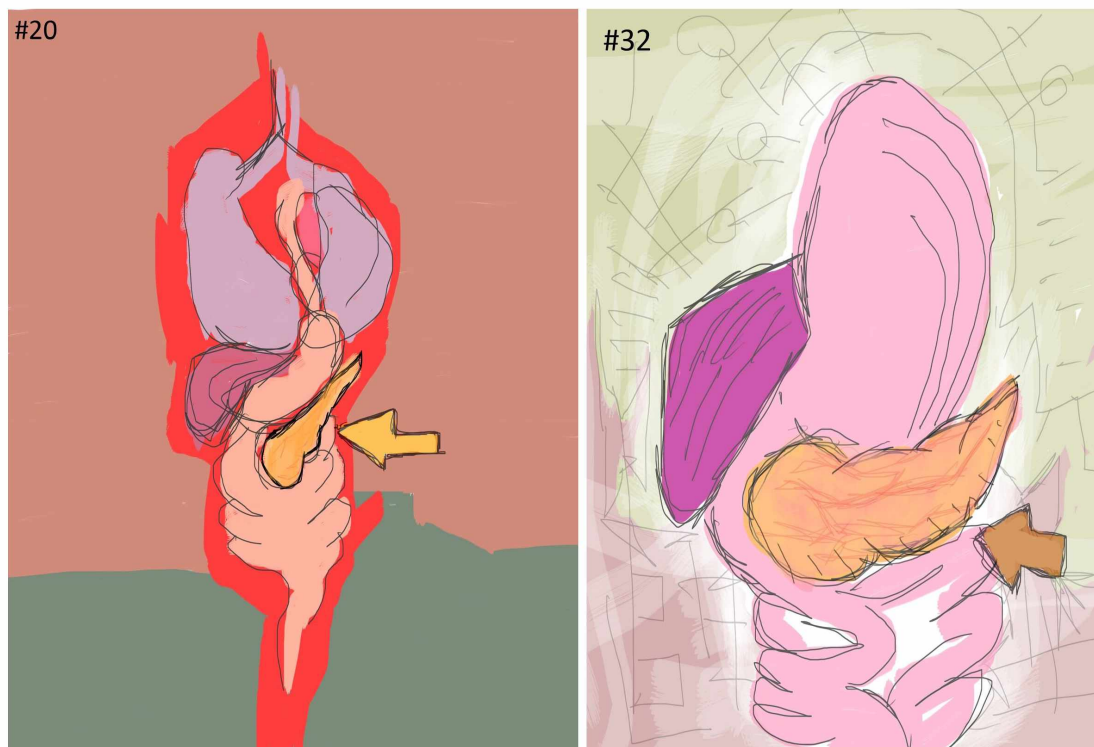
(Painting assemblages and "The Working Lung" 2012 (Right))

In 2011 the Whitney Museum of Art showed a large body of Lyonel Feininger's works "Lyonel Feininger: At The Edge of The World" which displayed a large body of his works throughout his life. In that show they had a large variety of his "Gelmeroda" paintings, drawings, and prints. In these works Feininger painted the church of Gelmeroda. In the course of these works the church's form evolves, shifting from architecture to geometry. Eventually these works become single spires and geometric compositions interrupted by the church's form.



(Lyonel Feininger, "Gelmeroda I, XI, and IV" 1915-1930)

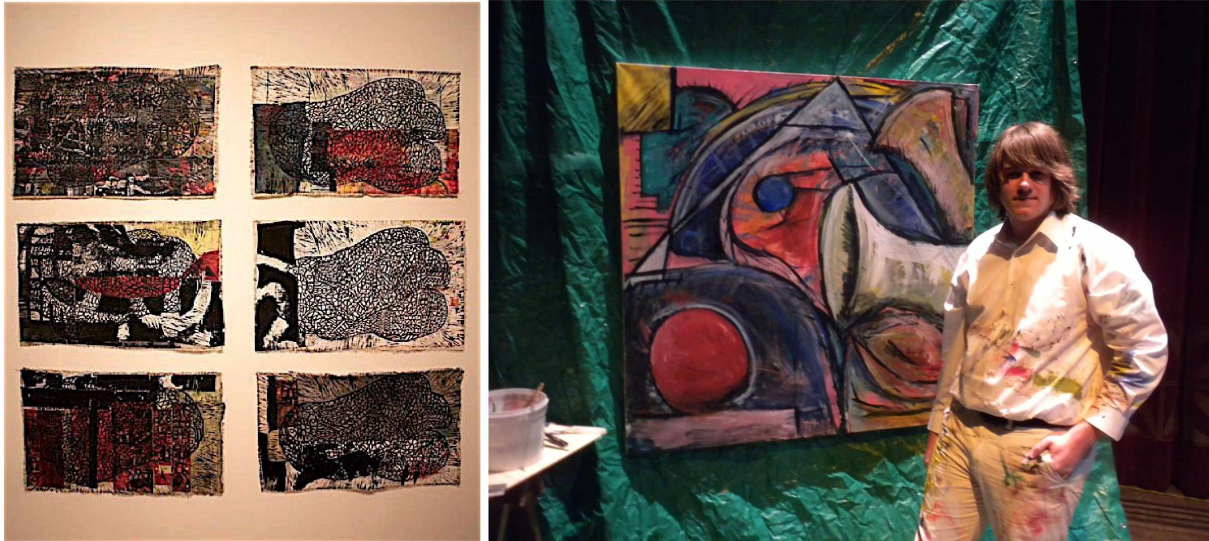
Over 2012-2014 I began a series of organ drawings using the pancreas inspired by Feininger's approach. As a child I found the human body fascinating, likely because of the invisible component of “human parts”, and sought to understand the systems which keep us all alive. Of all the organs, the pancreas was always my favorite. The reasoning of a three year old Max is still unclear, however it seems to be a combination of the shape, name, color, and unclear specific purpose of the organ. These drawings deconstruct the figure in a manner similar to Francis Bacon, and most incorporate the entire digestive tract. There are in total roughly one hundred of these pieces and they span a variety of media from digital drawing, analog drawing, painting, and printmaking. The majority of the works were digital, and were drawn with transparent color settings.



("Pancreas Series #20 and #32 2012-2014)

The Pancreas Series remains a critical part of my artistic development, as over the course of the series my organ forms became more and more abstract and stylized. The only constant became the arrow pointed towards the pancreas. The organ systems became more and more removed from the initial context of anatomy and began taking on figurative characteristics. I called this form a Biomass: something round and oblong, assembled like a stack of mixed organs. These shapes still feature heavily in my works, but have evolved to include a greater variety of formally similar natural phenomenon. This methodology is also how I continue to abstract shapes; a process of drawing and redrawing, slowly reducing a shapes to their most defining components.

At the suggestion of printmaking professor Noel Anderson, I was put into an advanced experimental relief woodcut class. I had never printed a single image before, but he insisted he would make me into a printmaker. From there my work veered into a different direction and I embraced printmaking, crossing it with my painting works. This took the form of carving deep into medium-density fiberboard (MDF) and printing onto canvas surfaces assembled from the fragments of prior paintings. I was printing atop abstract paintings and letting the two different images fuse together, essentially allowing forms to be created through an image collaging process. These prints were hung as is; unframed and unmounted as a thick tapestry like piece of canvas.



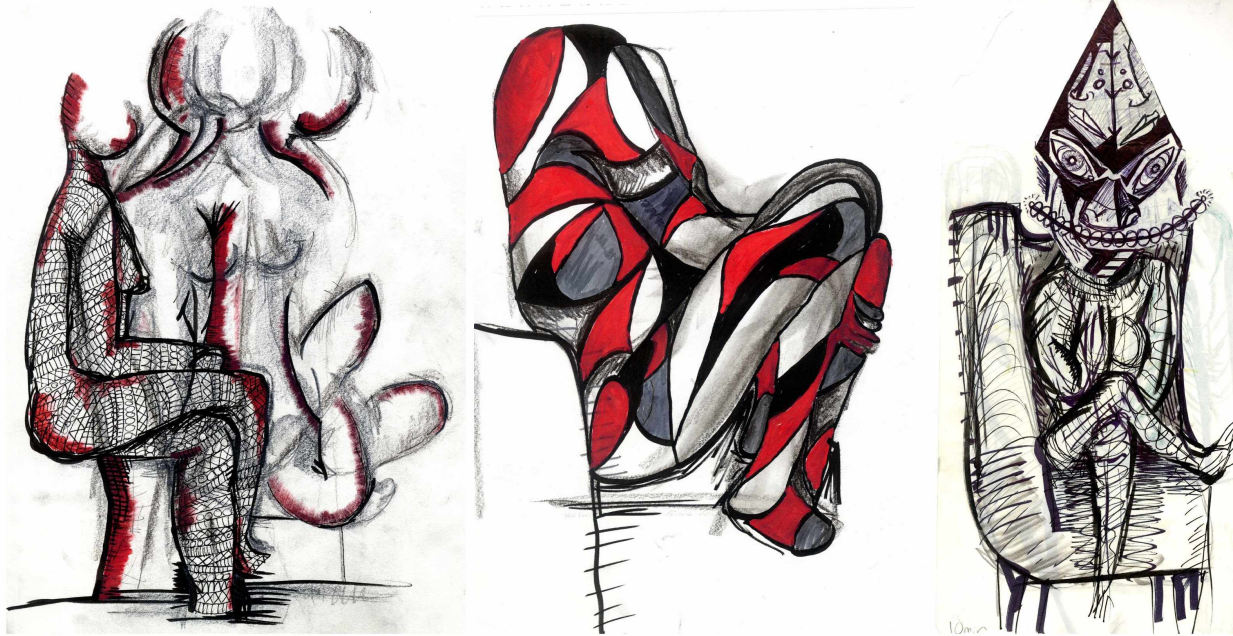
("Strauss Set" 2014 (left), CCM Jazz Orchestra Collaboration 2013 (right))

When I first arrived at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, I was eager to pick up where I left off from my undergraduate career. I had untapped ideas which I felt needed a revisit. Soon the scientific presence in Fairbanks began to change the nature of my organic abstractions. I began running the Friday night life drawing sessions, and started coming up with experimental ways of abstracting the human figure. I would take cubist exercises in which I would draw the figure atop itself, lining up the spinal cord but drawing everything else wherever it fell. Over time I began thinking on my undergraduate life drawing classes and my instructor Jenny Roesel Ustick who encouraged us to draw the skeletal and muscular systems of the human body to truly understand the way forms along the figure moved. I took her lessons and mixed them into my cubist exercises, drawing figures, organs, and skeletal forms all atop one another in one big visual representation of the abstracted human system incorporating motion, rotation, and the entire human viewed through. This exercise began changing

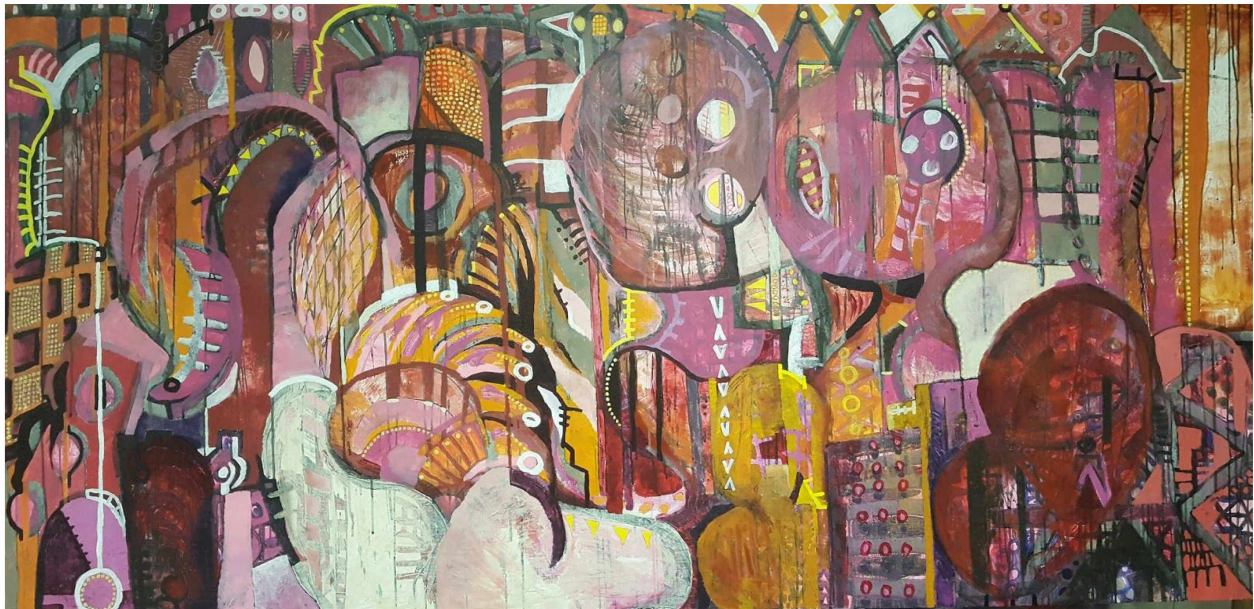
the way I viewed my organ imagery, something which was further changed by the “In a Time of Change: Microbial Worlds” show at Well Street Art Co. I began thinking about everything which encompasses round organic oblongs, from plants, invertebrates, and microbial forms to the sea life which inspired me as a child in addition to my undergraduate pancreata. This new shape became my *Organics* a shape I define simply as “a round but asymmetrical form found from nature, abstracted down from its original context”. My first large work in Alaska “Digestive Throng, Those That Breathe” synthesizes this kind of form and serves as my first *system relationship* inspired work.



(Life drawing exercise)

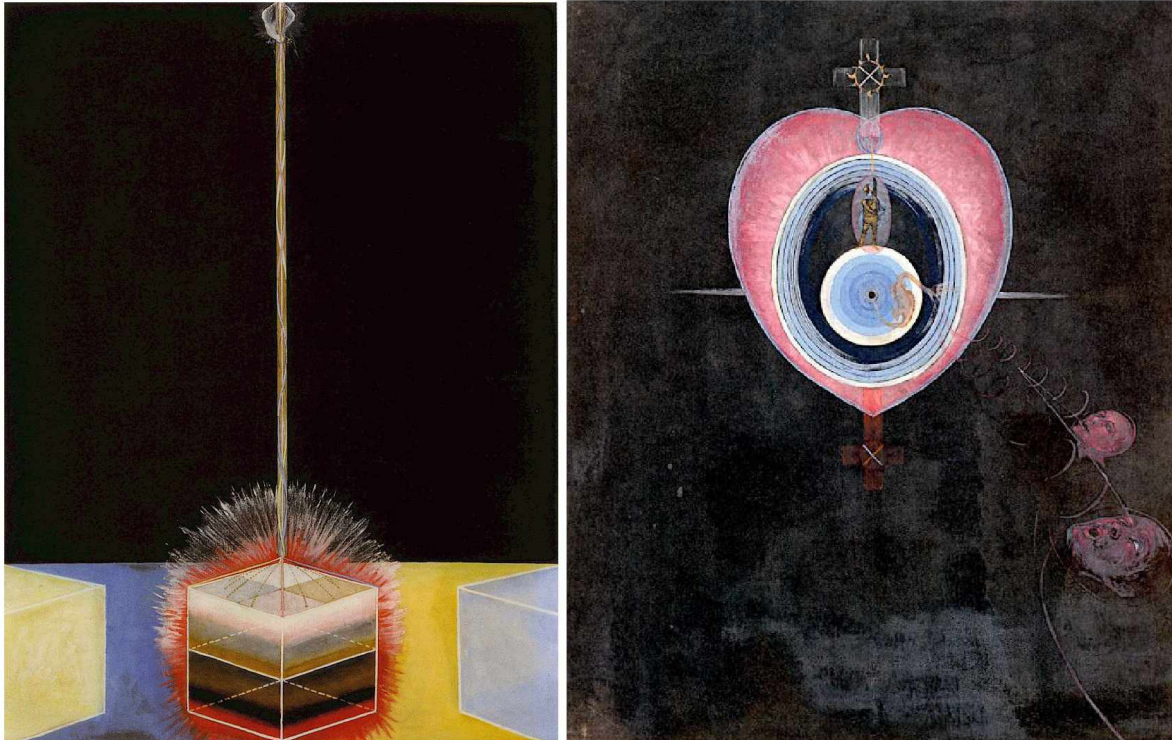


(Life drawing exercises)



(“Digestive Throng, Those That Breathe”)

One of my biggest challenges throughout my thesis work has been varying the sense of space and form in my paintings. Overall I employ a fairly busy aesthetic, one which emphasizes a large number of varied forms woven throughout the overall composition. Some of the feedback I received from UAF faculty brought to my attention how visually exhausting that can be when viewed in a large series. One of my goals became to vary the formal busyness of the work, and to that end I began looking at the methods other artists used. I began by learning more about artists like Pablo Picasso and Wassily Kandinsky, and looking back on major influences of my past namely Feininger and Bacon. Through Kandinsky I learned of Hilma af Klint. Klint's work revolves around mysticist themes and have a symbolist feel to it. Her works also emphasize single forms, or a series of forms working in tandem. I was able to see characteristics of my own working method in Klint, and after seeing a number of her works at the Guggenheim's "Hilma af Klint: Paintings for the Future" I began looking at her sketchbooks to learn more about her aesthetic sensibilities. Klint sketched her paintings after finishing them to further resolve forms, and prepare for future works. I found these sketches invaluable in thinking about my own paintings, and started working similarly.



(Hilma af Klint "Group IX, No. 3 The Dove" 1915 (Left), "The Dove, No. 09" (Right))

Using Klint's sketchbooks as a jumping off point, I started sketching individual shapes from paintings to start deciding which shapes I wanted to work into their own compositions. This resulted in two of my strongest paintings from my work "Pink Pyramidal" and "Blue Organic". I picked these two shapes in particular because of their contrasting characteristics. The "organics" serve as a sort of undulating bio-shape, so the "pyramidal" is the opposite as something hardline and edged designed formally to bisect organic forms.



("Pink Pyramidal" 2018 (Left) "Blue Organic" 2018 (Right))

This process of working individual forms also became crucial towards a series of murals I would paint over 2018. Mural work has always been something I have wanted to do, painting on walls is an activity which taps back into mankind's prehistoric nature. My goal in these murals was to work forms with a semi-microbial feel beginning with the bisected organics of "Outwards, Outside". "Lying Within" was designed as a microscopic look at the forms which make up "Outwards, Outside". The third mural "Watching Forms/Standing Masses" was intended as a macro look at the forms of "Outwards, Outside". All three murals were also intended as opportunities to begin testing my hand at painting murals, with the ultimate goal of working a mural into my thesis. While painting I found myself heavily drawn towards the corner transitions in gallery spaces. Making images which bridged ninety degree transition around the interior of the room

feels conceptually like working along the inside of a cube. Cubes are a structural form which has appeared in my work over a couple years, and musing on the interior of the cube made me feel as though my thesis mural needed to be painted following this sensibility. The actual design for this last mural, titled “A Collection of Masses” was something I had come up with months before even considering murals as an option. My original idea was to construct a series of large panels to make a conglomerate of geometric masses which I would then hand paint over. Ultimately a mural makes far more sense, so the design was kept and moved directly to the wall. This mural is intended as an image which suspends other images, emphasizing open rectangular spaces to be filled with artworks. The paintings hung over the mural serve as a process of visually collaging works together.



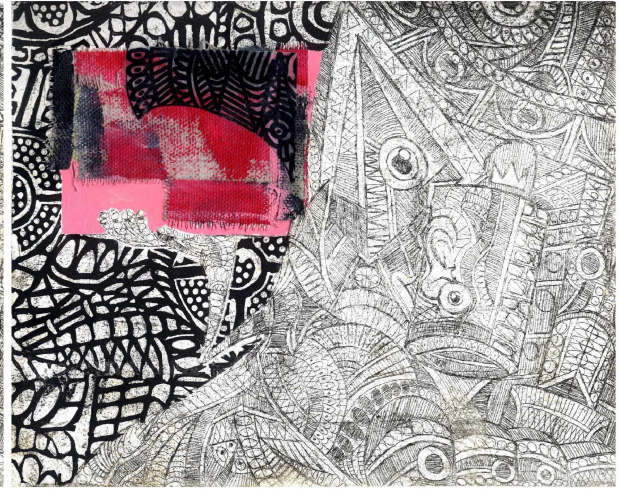
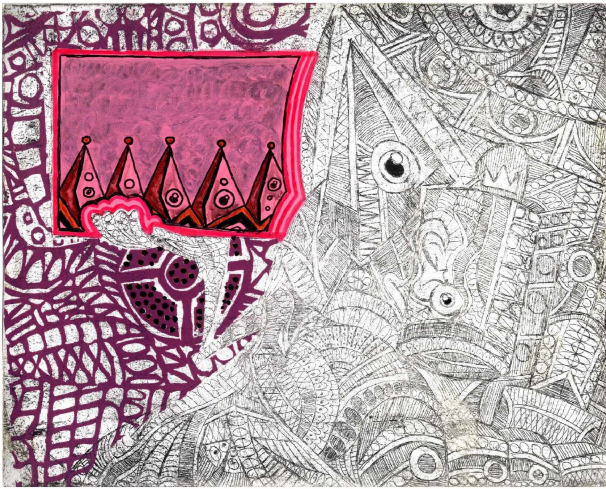
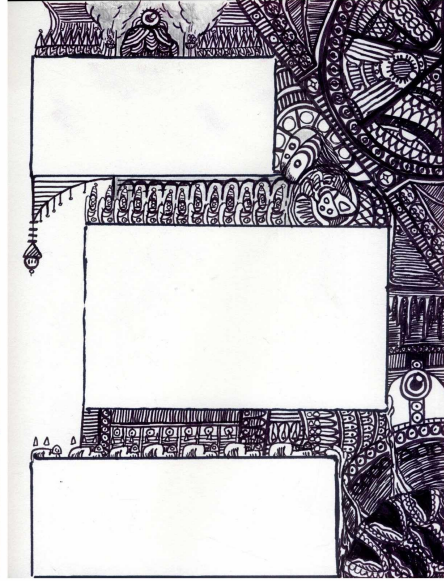
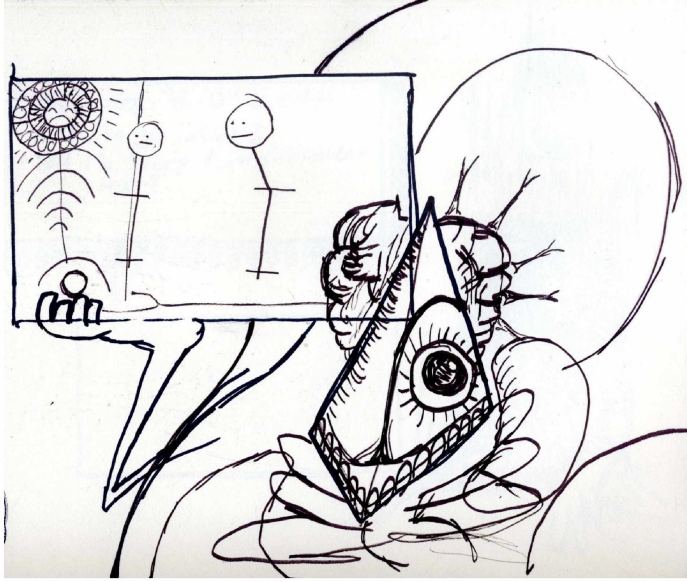
“Outwards, Outside” 2018



“Lying Within” 2018

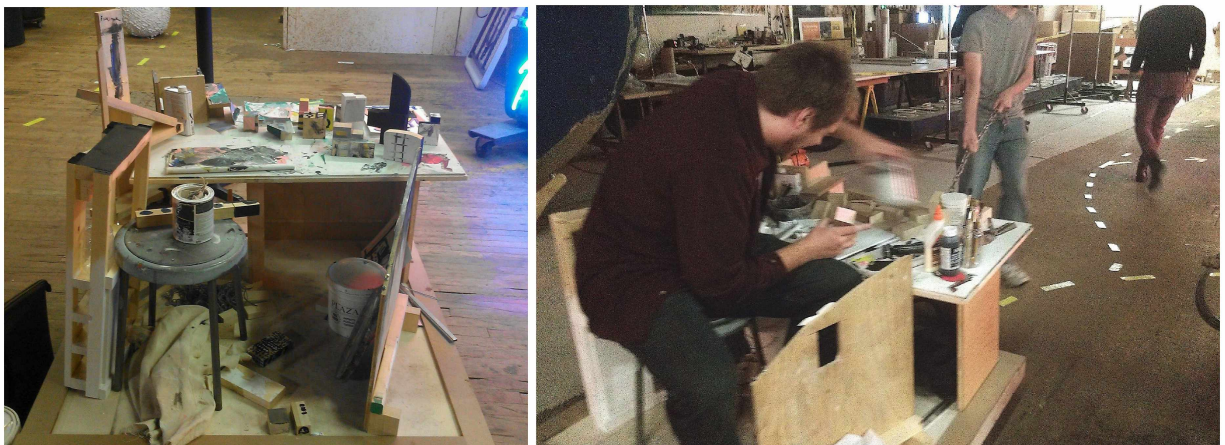


“Watching Forms/Standing Masses” 2018



("A Collection of Masses" (mural))

Recently I find myself focused on the works and artistic practices of Dieter Roth. Roth first made an impact on me in 2013, when I viewed a large number of his works at the Hauser & Wirth Gallery in Chelsea NY. The exhibition titled: “Dieter Roth. Bjorn Röth.” included a large variety of work including his “Large Table Ruin”. Walking through the gallery space and being surrounded by a mixture of artworks, art objects, and studio structures left me imagining Roth at work, moving throughout his studio. It got me thinking about this relationship between artist, studio, and gallery, something which later took the form as my “Studio on Wheels”. This piece was a small studio which moved throughout the gallery through viewer involvement. I worked on my small platform throughout the show reception making small sculptural assemblages incorporating painting and collage pieces.

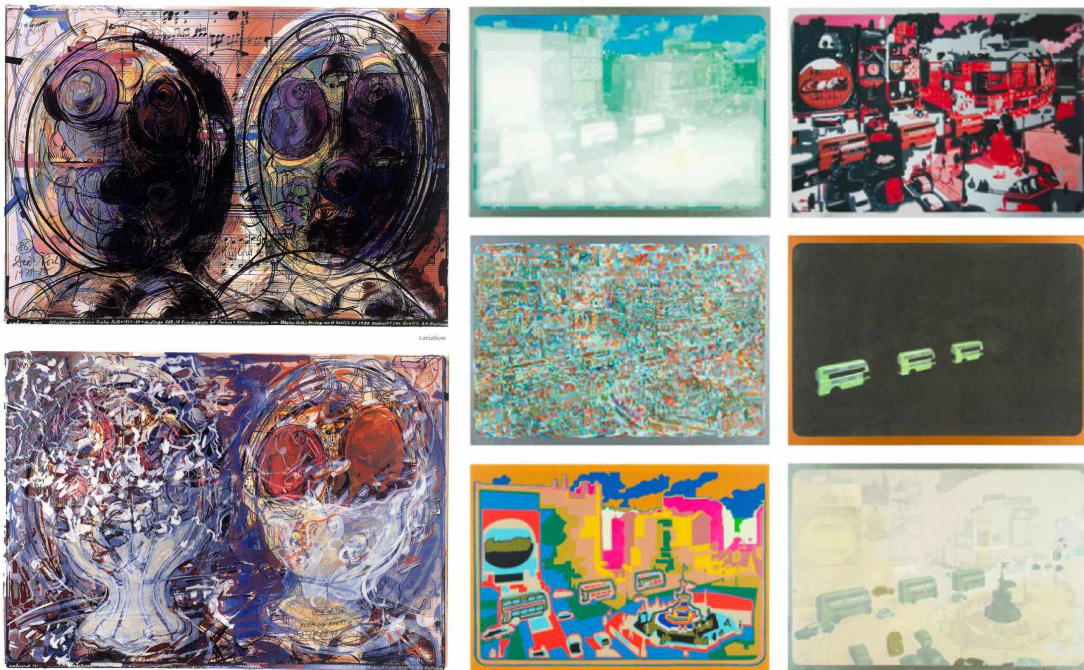


(Studio on Wheels)



(Dieter Roth, "Large Table Ruin")

Printmaking at UAF has given me further admiration for Roth. His prints are complex and seek to manipulate the nature of printmaking, embracing experimental editing the printing matrix and layering printed images to produce monotype series. His “Piccadillies” print series repeatedly manipulates the same image, making edits to create new compositions. This method of working with a single image, and attempting to edit it to seek new forms is similar to my own method of abstraction, and following Roth’s model I have begun a practice of experimentation while I print. This can mean any number of thing, from rotating blocks and printing them atop one another, to combining processes entirely to make works that hybridize relief, intaglio, collagraph, and screenprinting. This is a drastic growth from my undergraduate experience, and while I still implement a considerable amount of relief printmaking having a greater breadth of technical skill has furthered my thinking as an artist and benefits my artistic practice in a breadth of media.



(Dieter Roth, “Blom & Avextir (Flowers and Fruit)” (Left), “6 Piccadillies” (Right))



("A Recollection of Form, The Inflated Lung" 2018 (Left))



("Processive Worshippers (Deafening Cycle)" 2018)



("Systems of Hierarchy" 2018 (Left) "Abstraction of a Holy Grail, or Good Grief Where Has That Holy Object Gone Now?" 2018 (Right))



("Sphere of Influence" 2017 (Left) "Moongazer" 2017 (Right))



("Fabrica Cor / Fabrica Meum" 2019)

I initially pushed my printmaking technical skill from relief on canvas towards intaglio processes as I had no experience with the latter. This culminates in my print "A Recollection of Form, The Inflated Lung". This print incorporates multiple blocks of color on handmade paper which then has an etched print to define the linework. My "Sphere of Influence" and "Moongazer" prints use a mix of relief, hand coloring, and screenprinting to make multi process varied images. "Fabrica Cor / Fabrica Meum" is a print I have continually revisited. It is my first and only collagraph, which is a process I look forward to continuing in the future. Overall my printmaking practice has flourished, expanding in processes, and the relief blocks I have pulled lately have a greater consideration over the design of the print something which was lacking in my older

prints on canvas. All of these developments get channeled into my collage and painting processes, as these prints get cut apart and worked into new compositions.

Some of my most substantial developments throughout my time at UAF has been developing my surfaces in a greater variety of medias. One of the ways I began expanding my surfaces was with handmade paper. The practice of making paper from hand has always been appealing to me, especially after researching Dieter Roth in further detail as it is something he frequently implemented. After talking to my mother and grandmother about their own experiences with making paper I went down the path of making screens to sift pulp, and began stockpiling scraps in the printmaking studio alongside Sara Hensel.



(Sifting pulp (left), finished pressed paper (right))

The paper was treated and pressed in varied ways, some thin and others thick and still tactile from the pulp. These thicker papers became a part of “Fracturing System (a time for disconnect and instability)”. Starting the painting early with layers of printed paper surfaces and handmade papers alongside raw canvas pieces created a surface which responds differently to paint in different areas.



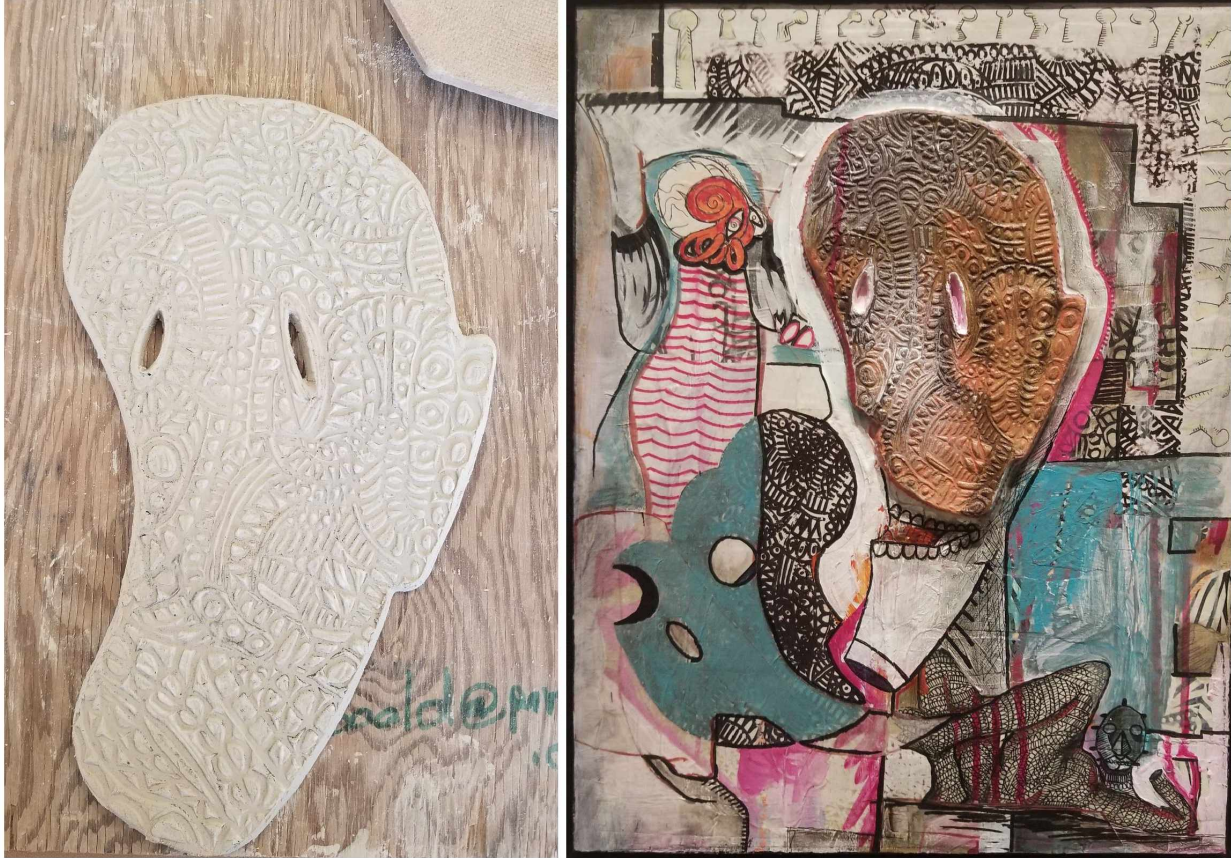
(Early detail, with raw canvas, printed surfaces, handmade paper adhered to surface)

I wanted to paint on a surface which shifted as I worked so my materials had plenty of materials variation to react to. My other goal was to introduce printing components early, so they have as much influence on the composition as possible. Some areas the prints remained untouched, and the painting merely grew around them. In others the painting envelops the print creating a variety of layered depth.



(“Fracturing System (a time for disconnect and instability)” 2017)

I spent some time over my second year, applying linoleum relief blocks to ceramic tiles. The process consisted of using old relief plates, rubbing them down in cornstarch to prevent the grooves from holding clay, and pressing the plate into a rolled ceramic slab. I cut around my plate and peeled the ceramic tile off for future use. My goal here was to find a more durable and archival surface to capture relief textures to mix into my works. Using wood panelling, and researching the methods Julian Schnabel used on his paintings which incorporate ceramics gave me the ability to introduce ceramic tiles into some works: “The Gathering/The Crowd/The Assembly”, “I’m Not Afraid of Asteroids”, “The Watchers The Waiters”, and “Factory Color / My Device”.



(Fired ceramic tile (left), "The Gathering/The Crowd/The Assembly" (right))

This is perhaps one of my most substantial developments, and is something I aim to incorporate further in the future as it makes a more archival relief surface.

In my ceramics studies Jim Brashear introduced me to some introductory form building using cut cardboard as a means to create basic forms. While I did not push this into a body of ceramic work, this technique ended up being pivotal towards a method which I would end up employing on my paintings to build up forms with acrylic gels. Working much the same way with cut cardboard I cut forms into thick cardboard and layed it over my paintings, then used shaving and scraping tools to run heavy acrylic gel into the indented area. After filling the area I removed the cardboard and cleaned the

edges up which resulted in forms of heavy materials which are raised off the canvas surface:



(Raised gel surface)

One of my primary artistic directives is finding unique and varied ways to interact with the viewers of my work. I have seen an enormous variety of shows throughout the years, as it is a high priority to most of my family. I find the ways viewers engage with artwork, artists, curating, and the studio fascinating. I seek out shows which incorporate participation and providing insight into artistic practices. I want to present situations which vary from the standard gallery environment. One of these is allowing viewers to touch my artwork. The tactile nature of artworks; the textures of paints, the woven threads of canvas, and detailing like collage and embossment as unique sensory

experiences can engage with viewers in further ways. The raised gel surfaces are a part of the tactile characteristic in my works. Implementation of actual raised surfaces and relief patterns creates a greater surface variety for my viewers sense of touch. My painting cubes also force this sense of touch. They were conceived under the idea of paintings which must be turned to be viewed. Their weights vary, they incorporate different surface texture, and some have bells rocks or clay inside to create sounds as they turn. Their six surfaces and continuous composition create works which each viewer has a unique experience. Everyone will see the surfaces differently, and since they are then placed back down the viewer takes a minor curatorial role editing the next viewers experience slightly. The barriers at the entrance to the gallery present a similar situation. They have a dual purpose; firstly to conduct the direction of entering the show space, secondly to create geometric windows which influence the viewpoint of works behind. This creates a relationship between the works, and presents viewers with a controlled random visual composition. Passerbys have varied experiences with the gallery space from a distance since they cant see the entirety of the show, but can see segments of what lies within. The paintings and mural within the gallery are visually collaged by the viewers position as they look into the space. The barriers are also simple and light in color scheme incorporating black, white, grey, and light pinks so the colors behind stand out.



(Window views through barriers)

My Masters thesis includes a performance titled “Curated Studio” is aimed to interact with the viewer in a much more direct method. Throughout the duration of the show, I will be working inside this small studio space (intentionally too small for me to stand in). In addition I am unable to enter or leave the box without assistance from my viewers. Once inside I produce small collage compositions on surfaces provided by viewers (I will provide canvas pieces, printmaking paper, bristol, and mat board). The box has a mail slot which will limit the size of the surfaces I can be given. In return for assisting me with my performative studio practice, viewers can take the small artworks produced provided they contributed a surface for me to work on. The studio itself is also curated, aimed at the becoming a curation of my own studio practice.

The inspirations behind my “Curated Studio”, and behind most of performance art are a mixture of Roth’s structures and the work of Joseph Beuys. Beuys worked in a large number of media: readymades, performance, academic art theory, and social happenings. He sought the gesamtkunstwerk a German ideal of “total work of art” which

puts to use all artistic practices. My first experience with Beuys was at a young age seeing his readymades, and it left a very minor impression. It took time for me to find influences in Beuys, particularly when I began delving further into performance arts. There are characteristics of theatricality and physicality present in Beuys performances which I find very compelling. Beuys seemed to have a constant awareness as to how he looked while performing, and to that end his performances always have him as a performer at its core. Beuys sought to teach by stimulating thought in his viewers, and that the viewer thinking stimulated their creativity. In the terms of Beuys "Creativity = Capital". I seek similar things in my performance works with emphasis on framing the creative process as something to display.

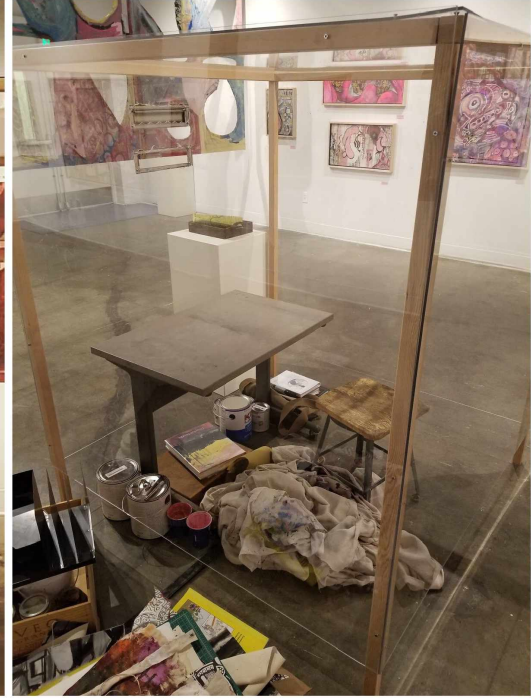
The more I analyzed and prepared for the "Curated Studio" performance, the two most important things became "It must be uncomfortable and hard to get out of" to emphasize my own physicality and "I need my viewers to get art objects out of participation" both characteristics I view in the spirit of Joseph Beuys. My goal with this work was to create an experience that gave viewers a moment to contribute to the creative process. In the "Curated Studio" I am just the artist on display, but lacking any substrate to work on. The decision to initiate any act of creation lies firmly at the viewers decisions they make. Do they pick a canvas or paper piece provided? Do they seek out a unique object? Do they bring something they use everyday? Or do they bring something to display? Through the course of the performance I had viewers contributing in all of these ways.



(Joseph Beuys, "How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare" (Left), "Twenty Four Hours" (Right))



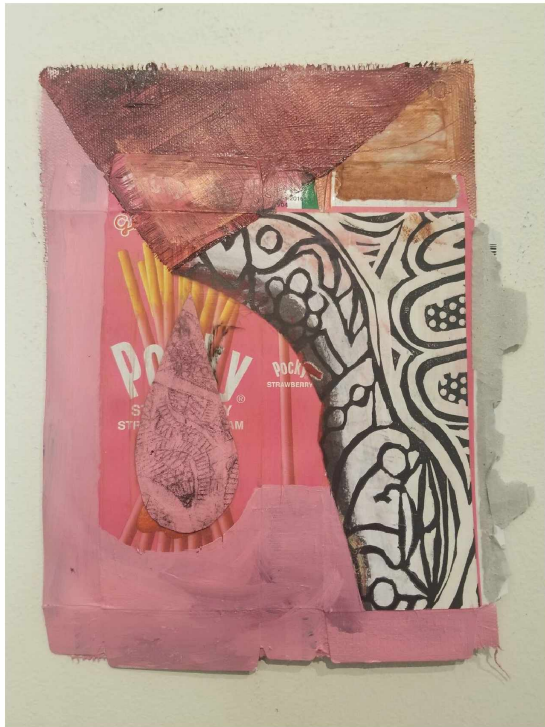
(Joseph Beuys, "I Like America and America Likes Me")





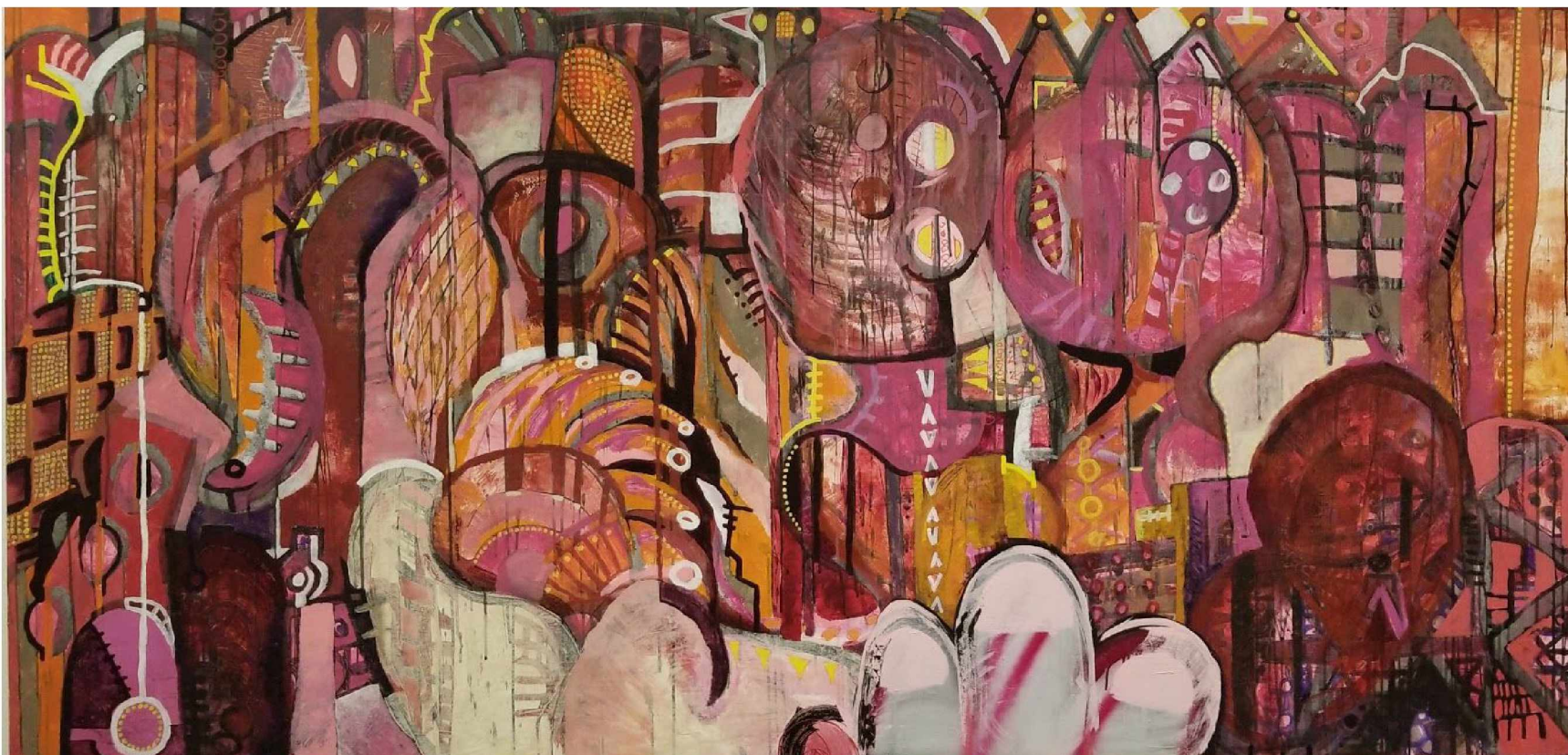
("Curated Studio")





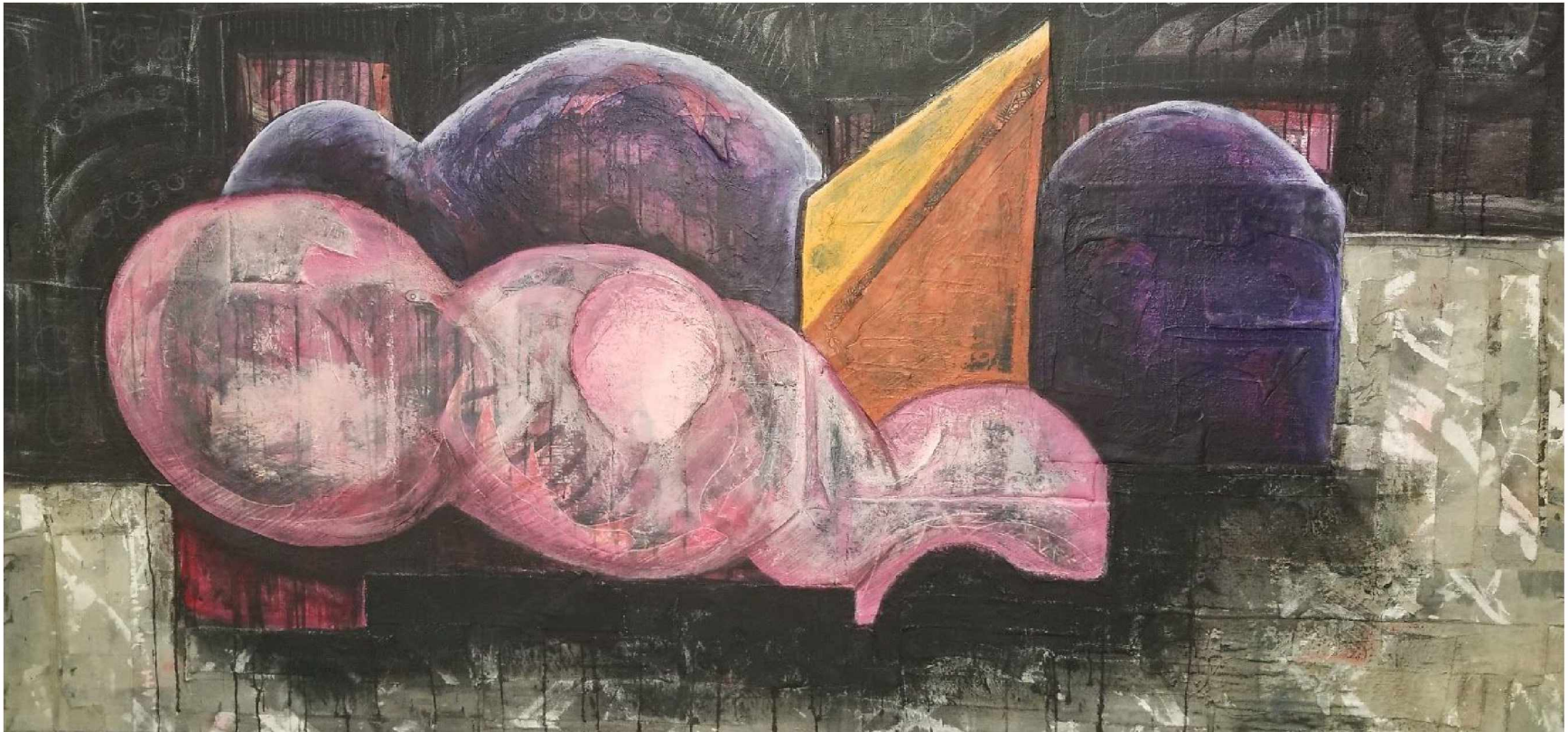
("Curated Studio" Assemblage Objects)

In reflection, A Collection of Masses aims to make a space covered in paint, wrapped in embossed canvas, and chopped up and adhered into a new abstraction. It incorporates both clean framed finished works, and large rough mural installations. The body of work together creates a space which is about color, material, and artistic practice. The space is tactile, and viewers embraced the opportunity to touch a gallery space with a range of hesitation to earnesty. The reaction was mixed, and nearly every piece was some viewers favorite. My time as a performer was kept busy and viewers were eager to contribute towards the ongoing organic performances. The performance operated as planned, and resulted in a number of small assemblage collages. Contributors arrived over multiple days, eager to collect the piece they had helped initiate. I found viewers considering the creation behind each of the works on display in the gallery, something I attribute towards the presented studio space. "A Collection of Masses" as an entire show has been in conceptualization for years perhaps something brewing from my childhood, and it looked exactly as I had hoped. The innumerable influences I have had along the way shine through the works, making "A Collection of Masses" a product of my essence as an artist, a culmination of everything I have learned and everything I have lived.



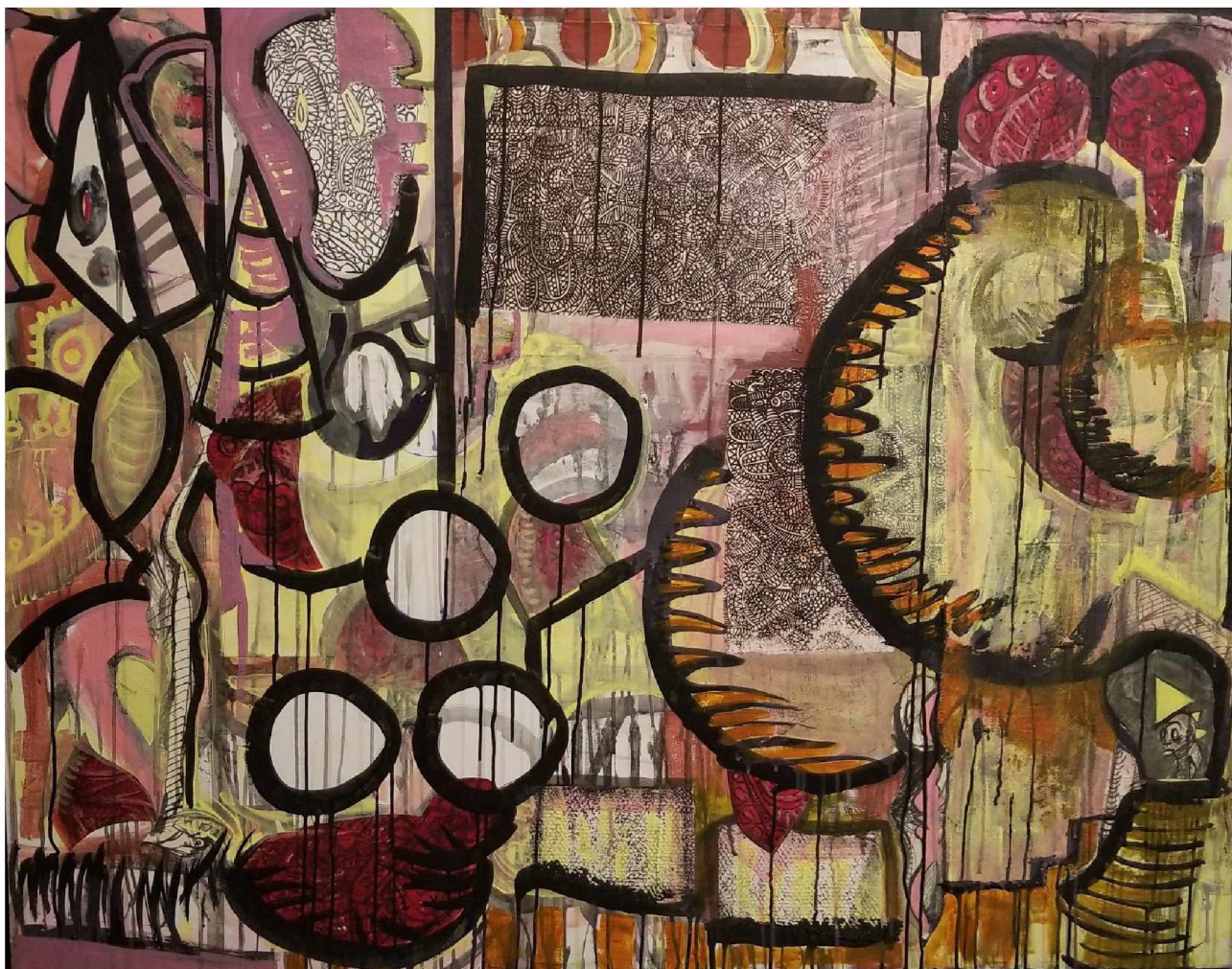
Digestive Throng, Those That Breathe

Acrylics, ink, charcoal, and pastel on canvas, 2016 92x45



A Reflective Moment When You Sleep

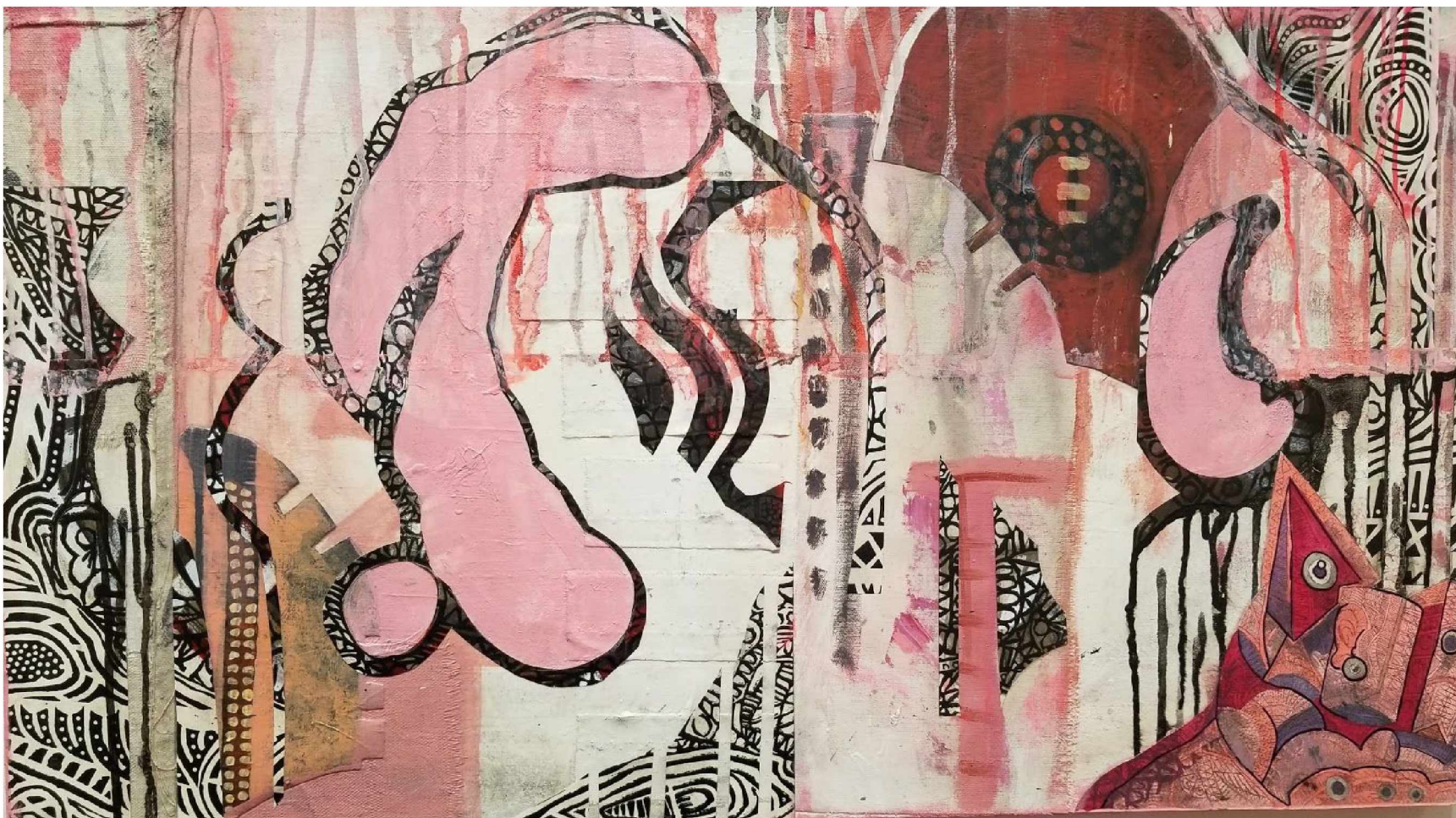
Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, raw canvas, and collagraph prints collaged on canvas, 2019 92x45



Fracturing System

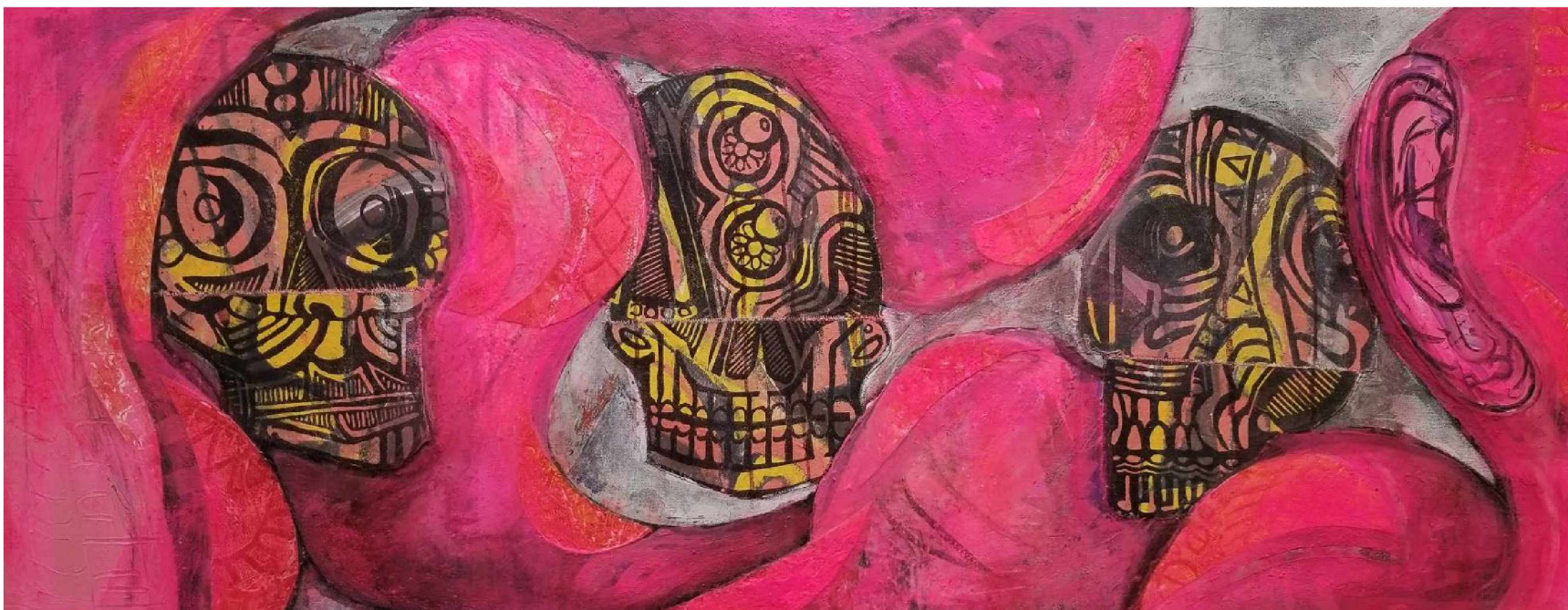
(a time for disconnect and instability)

Acrylics, ink, charcoal, pastel, canvas scraps, raw canvas, handmade paper and relief, and screen prints collaged on canvas, 2017 58x45



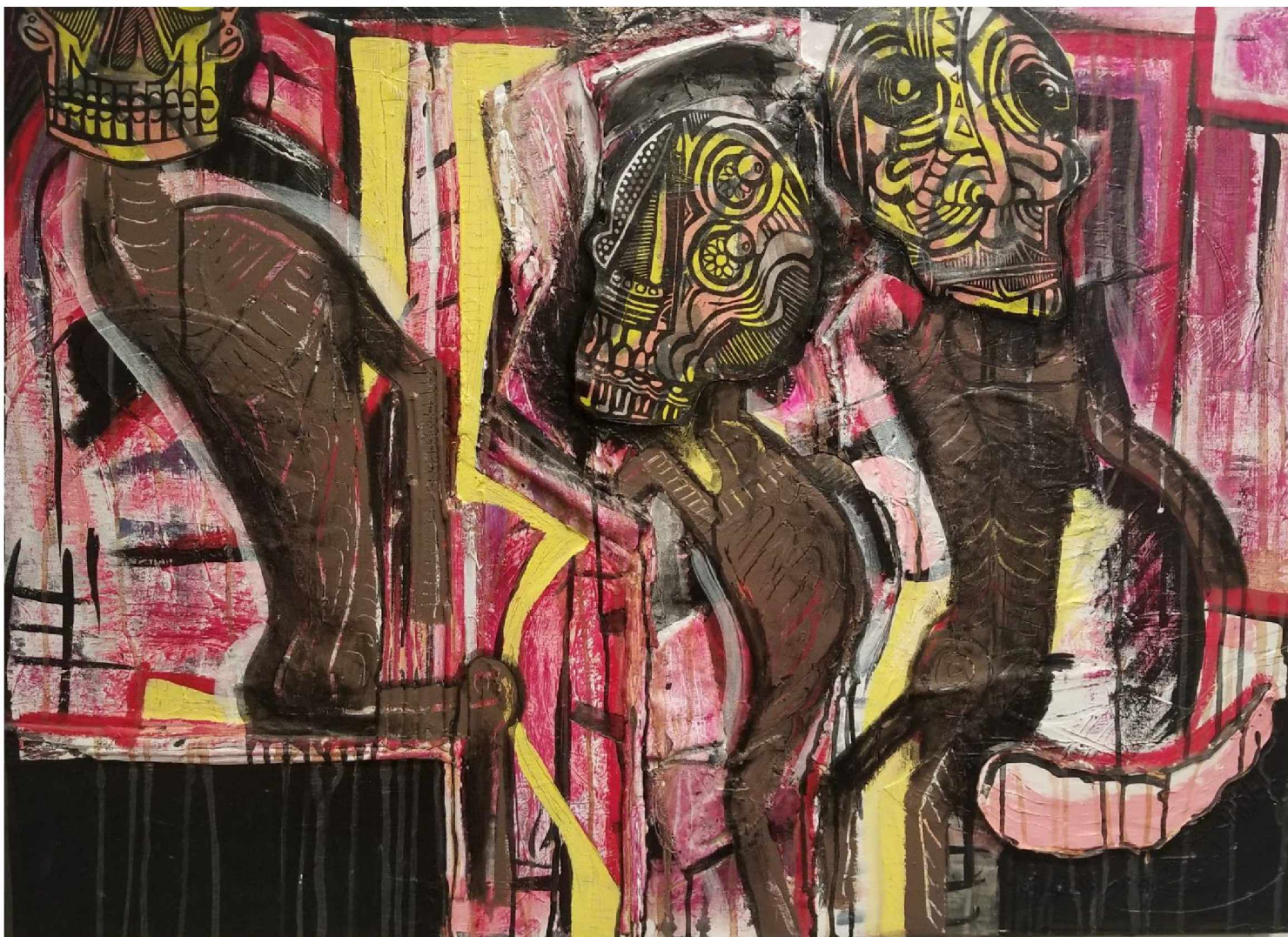
Splintering Membranes

Acrylics, ink, dye, canvas scraps, and relief and etching prints collaged on canvas, 2019 32x17



Breathing/Inflation/Exhalation

Arcylics, ink, dye, raw pigment, and relief canvas and collagraph prints collaged on canvas, 2019 40x16



Trio of Skulls

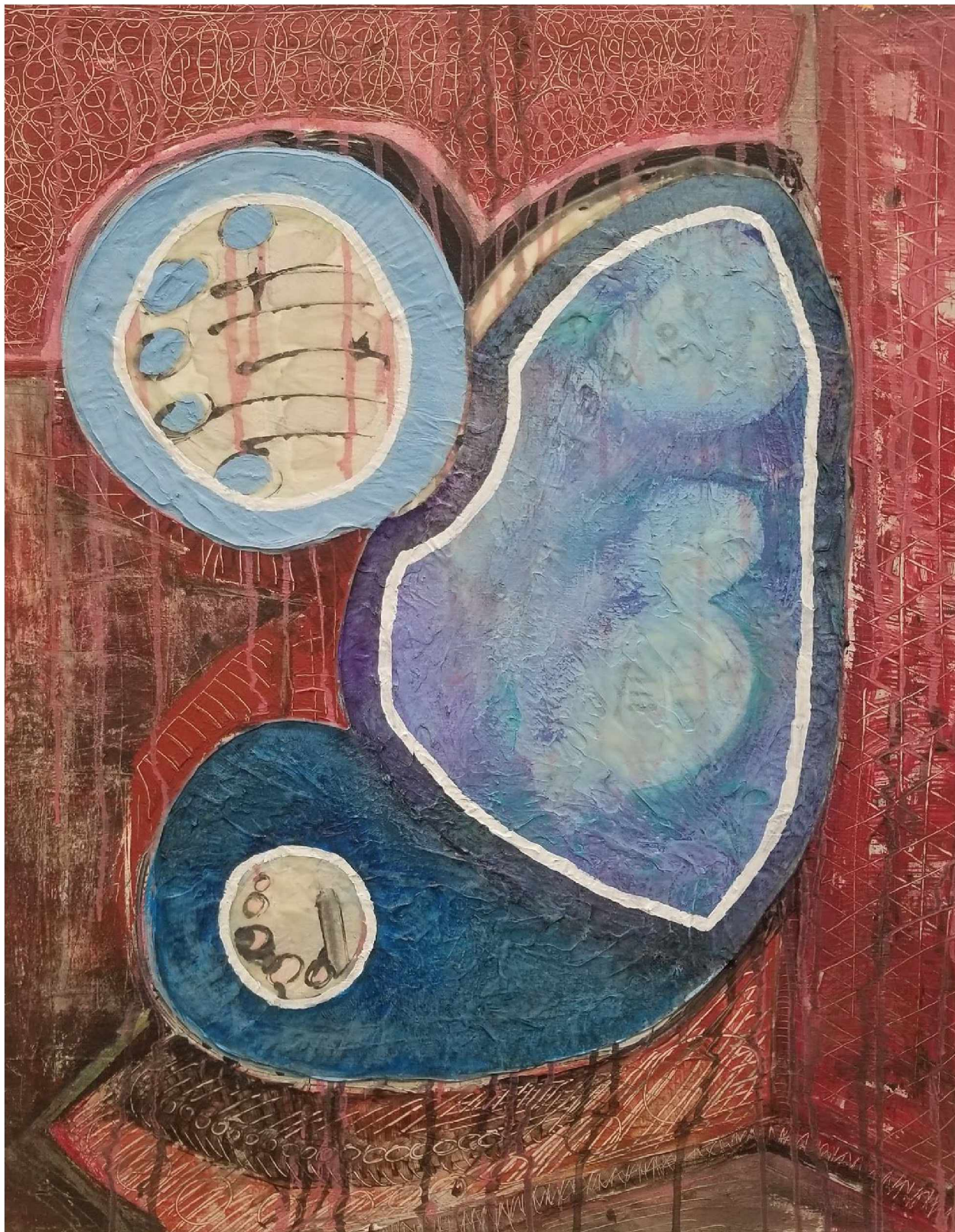
(Three Takes on Cranial Figures)

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, and relief canvas prints collaged on canvas, 2018 42x30



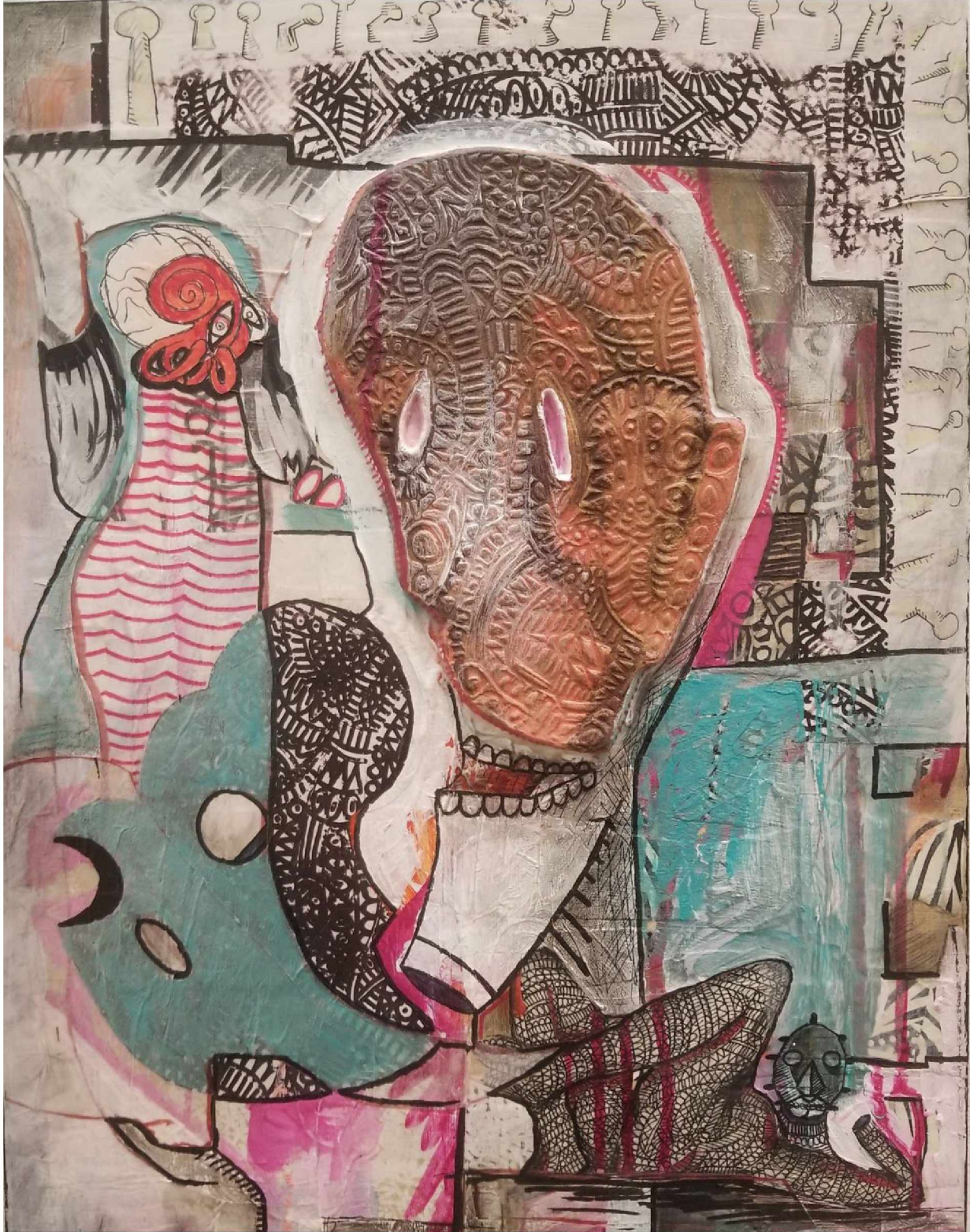
Pink Pyramidal

Acrylics, ink, and raw canvas on canvas, 2018 24x30



Blue Organic

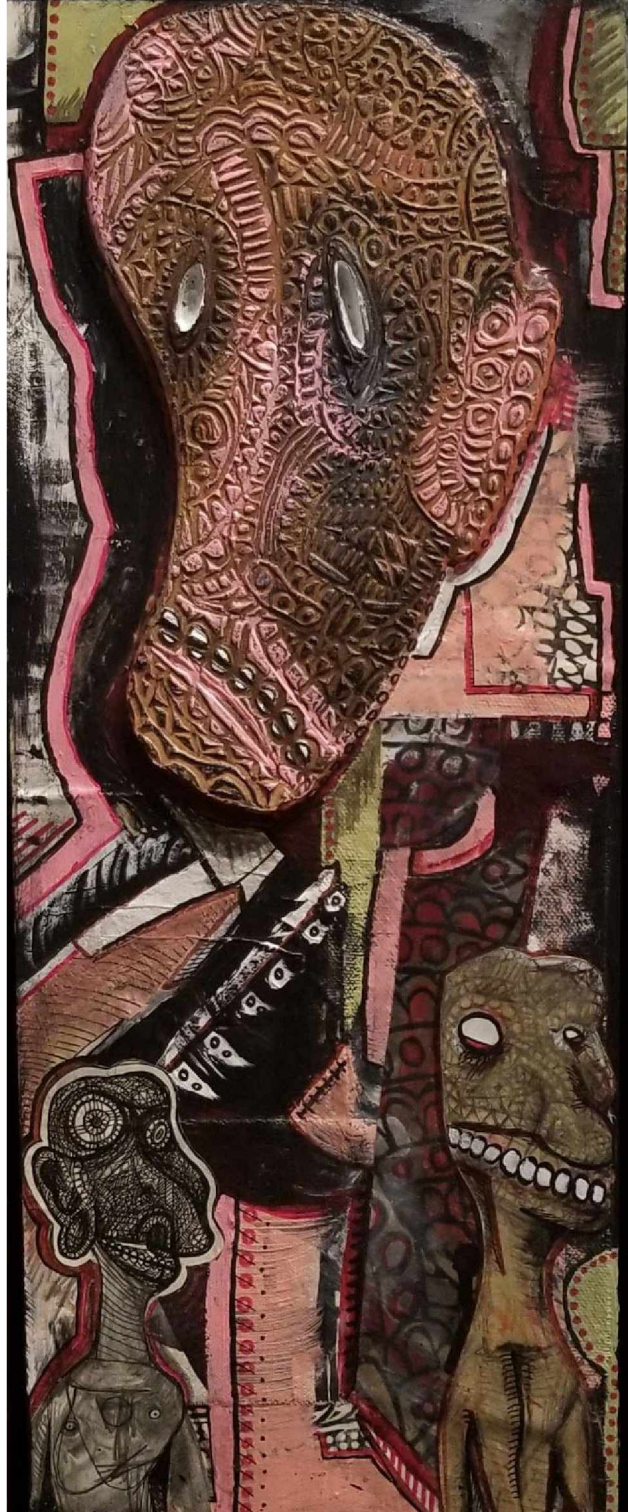
Acrylics and ink on canvas, 2018 24x30



The Gathering/The Crowd/The Assembly

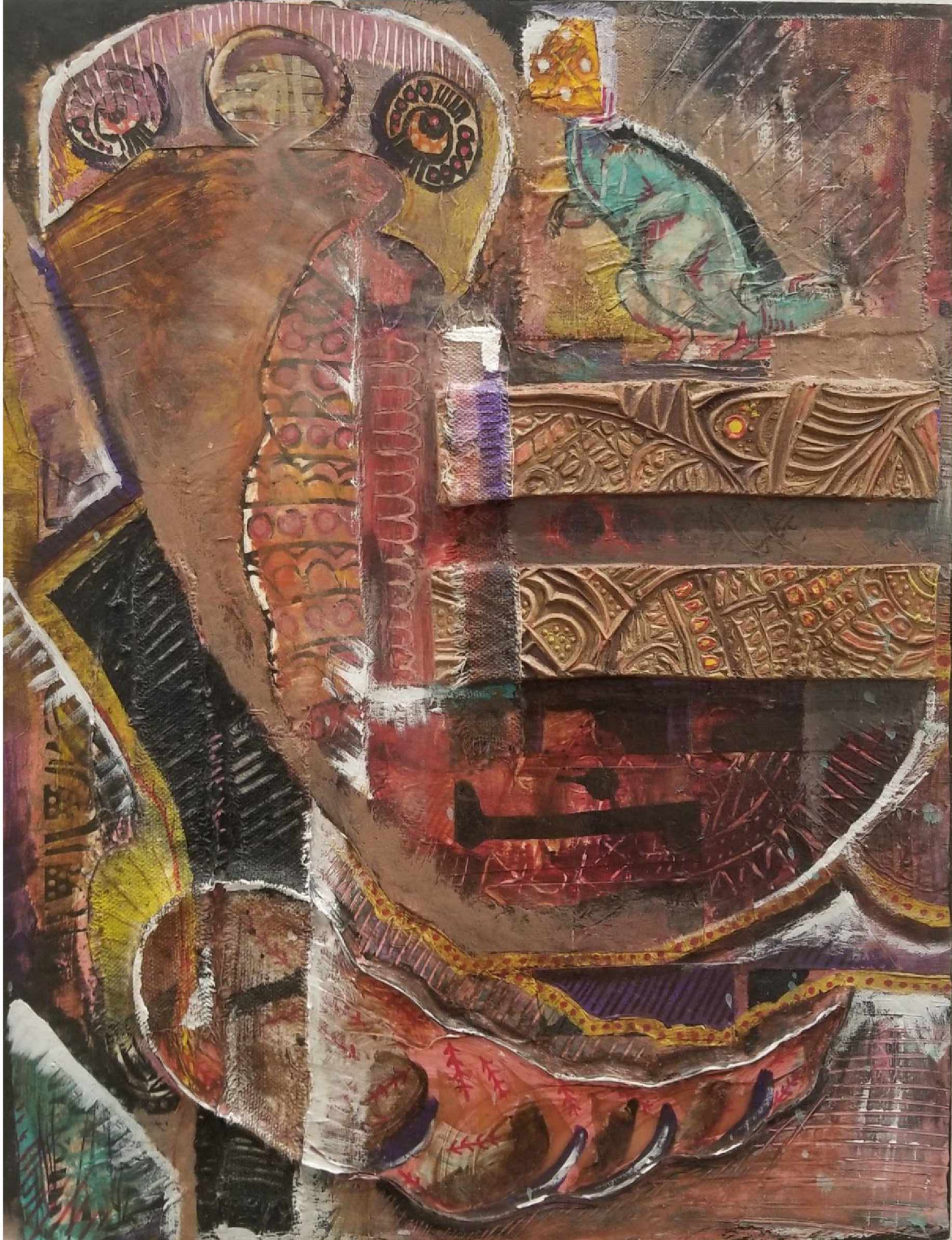
Acrylics, ink, charcoal, ceramic tile, and relief and screen prints collaged on board, 2018

14x18



The Watchers The Waiters

Arcylics, ink, charcoal, pastel, ceramic tile, and relief and intaglio prints collaged on board, 2018 8x20



I'm Not Afraid of Asteroids

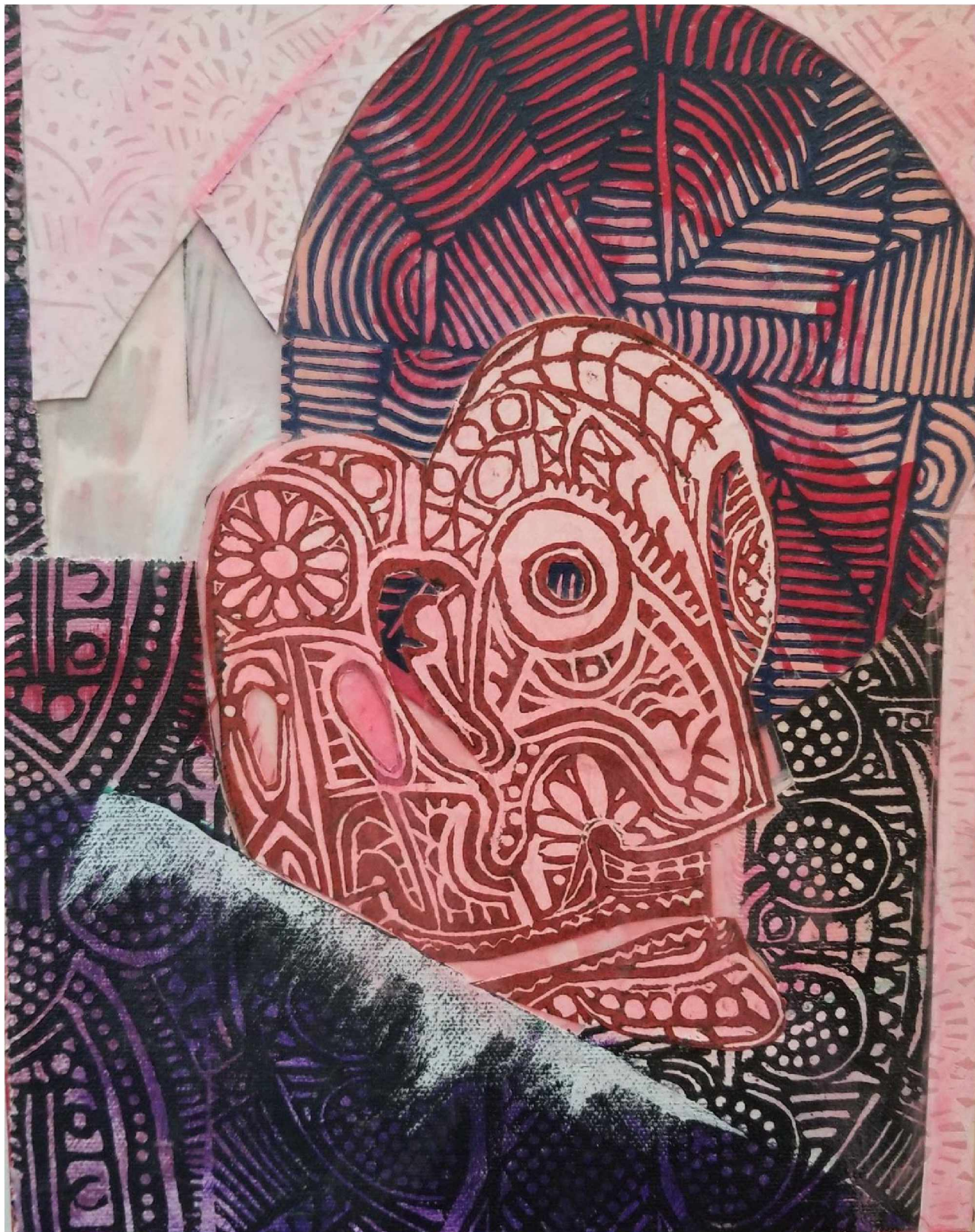
(Said the Dinosaurs as They Turned to Ash)

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, ceramic tile, and relief and screen prints collaged on board,
2017 14x18



Factory Color / My Device
(Fabrica Cor / Fabrica Meum)

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, ceramic head, and relief, collagraph, and screen prints
collaged on board, 2019 15X27



Sunken Mound, Rising Sphere

Acrylics, ink, dye, canvas scraps, and relief print collaged on board, 2019 8X10

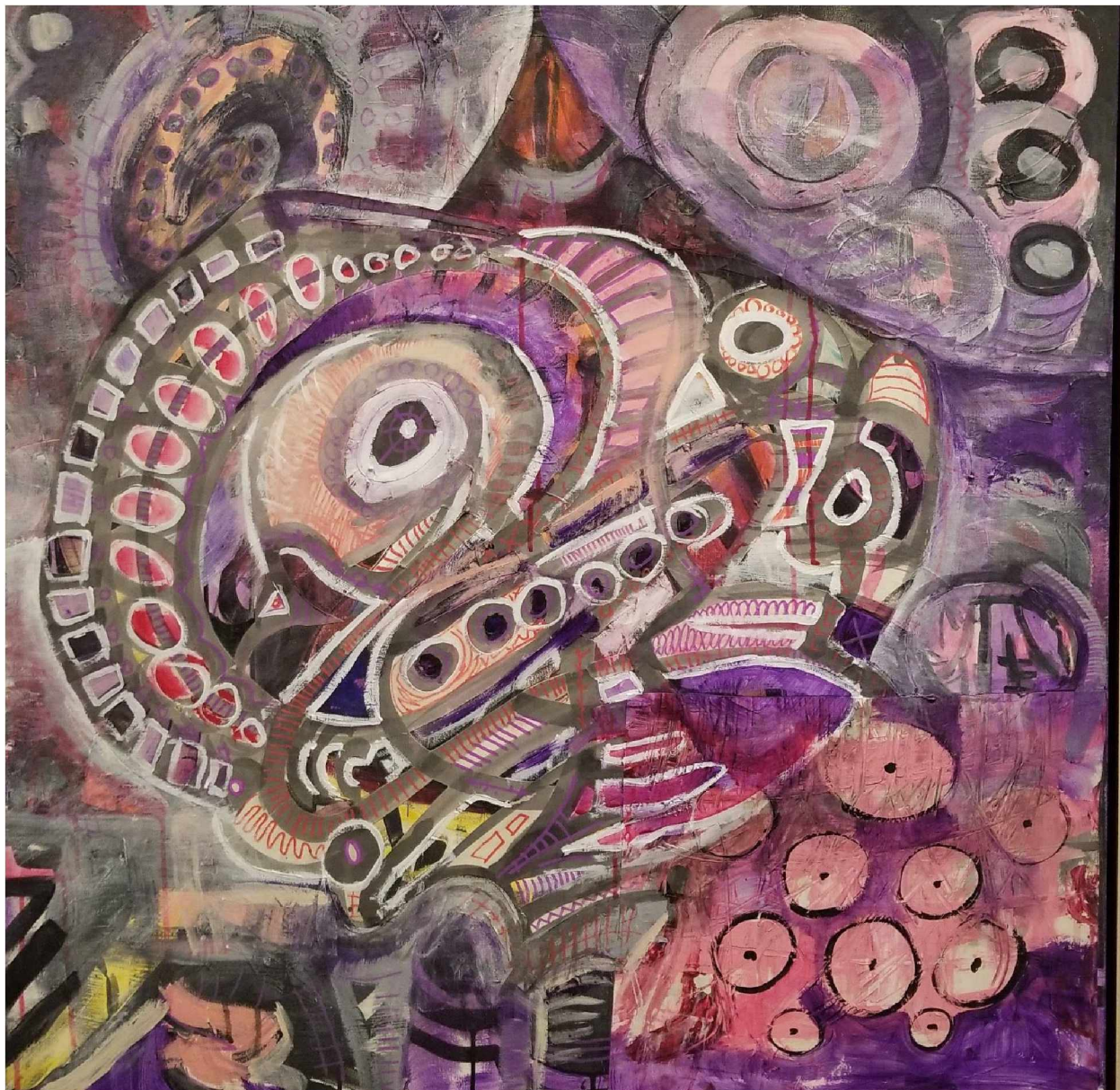


The Dysfunctional Mass

Arcylics, ink, and relief, etching, and screen prints collaged on board, 2019 12X12

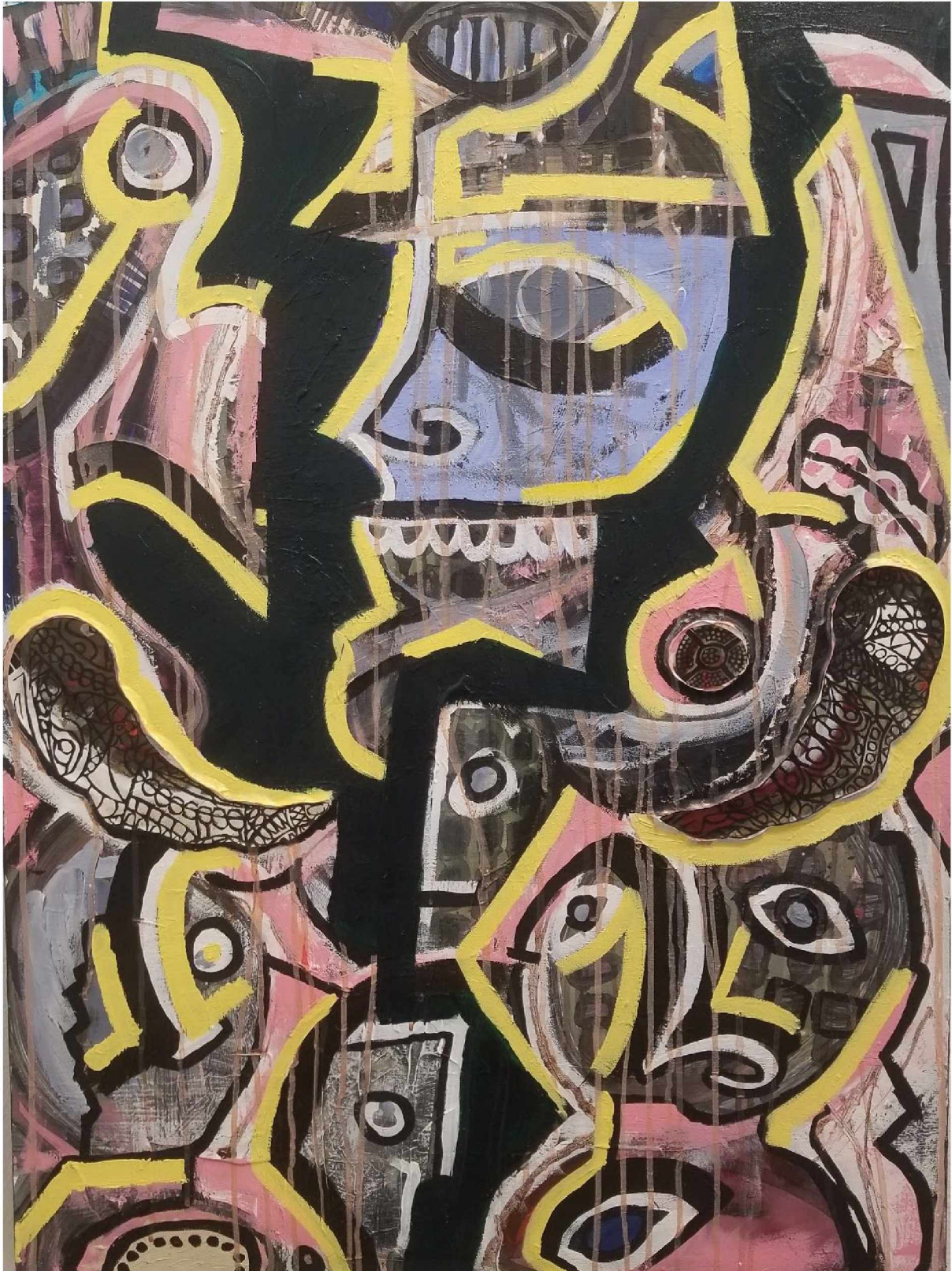


The Living Machine, Forms of Organic Growth
Acrylics, ink, dye, and canvas scraps on canvas, 2018 42X38



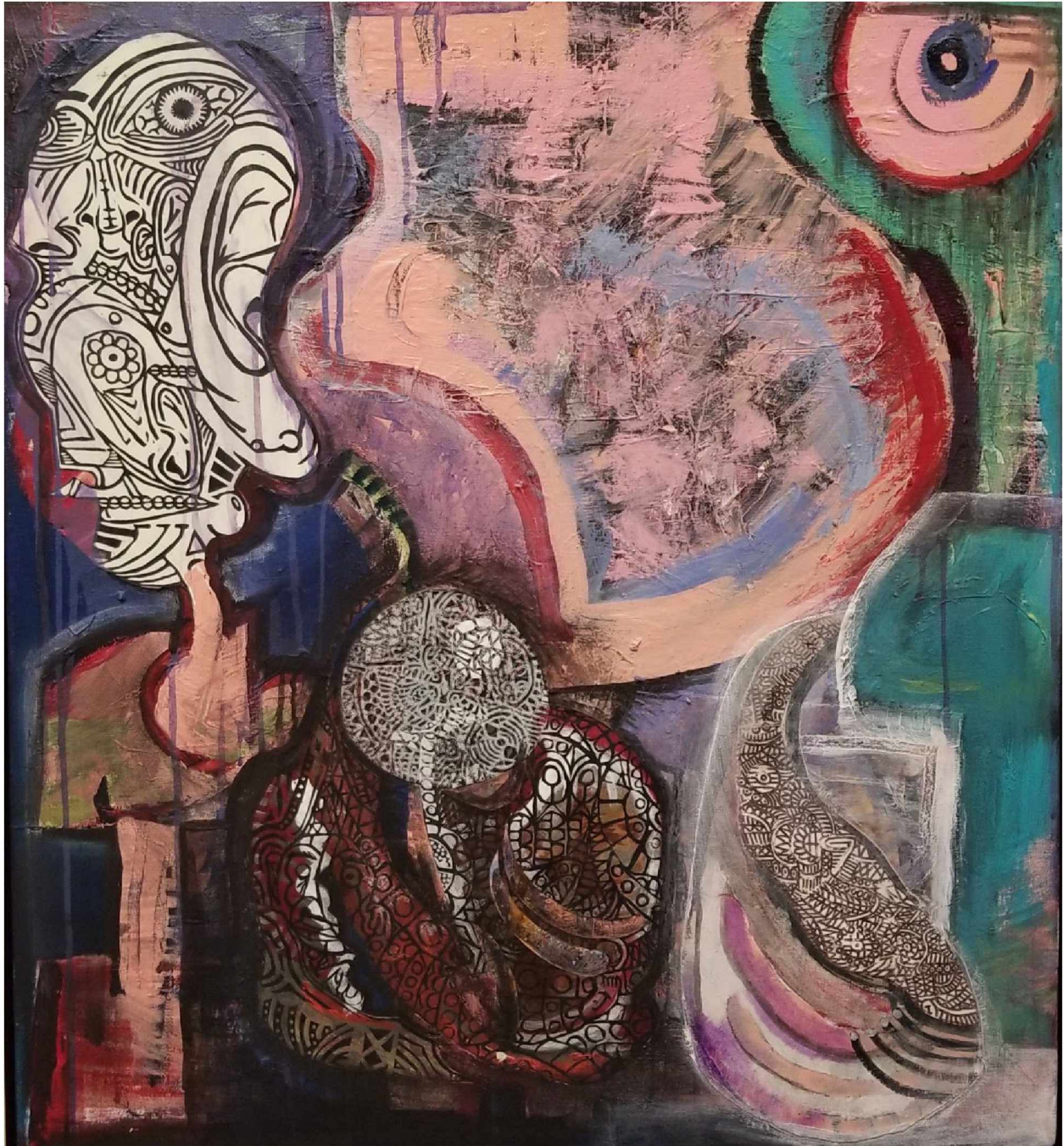
Spiral Mass

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, raw canvas, and paper collage on canvas, 2017 36X36



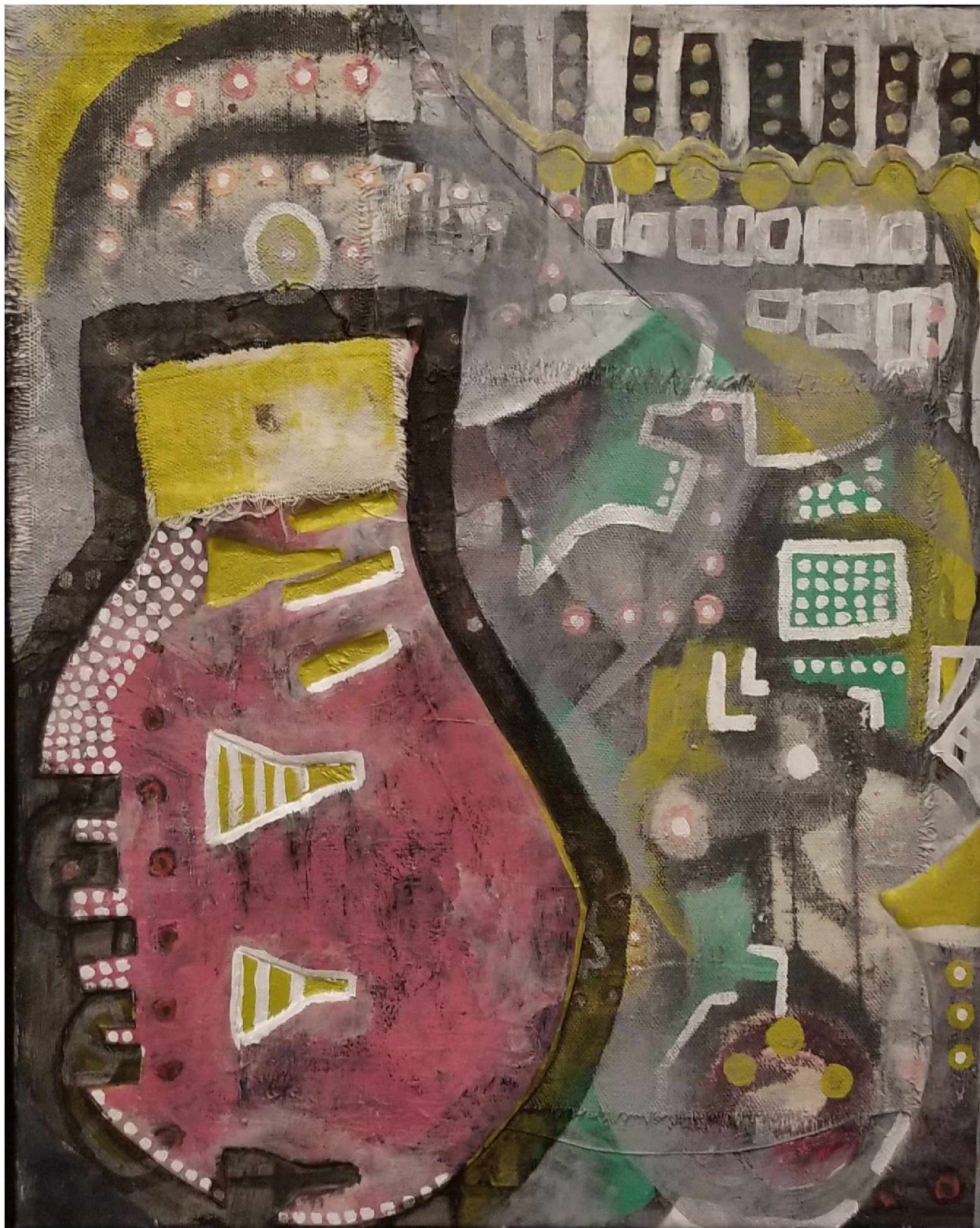
Expressive Mound II

Acrylics, ink, charcoal, pastel, and relief prints collaged on canvas, 2018 28X37



Expressive Mound

Acrylics, ink, charcoal, pastel, and relief prints collaged on canvas, 2018 29x32



Iconographic Vessel: Still Life of Water Jug

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, and raw canvas on canvas, 2016 16x20



Iconographic Vessel: Thinking on Raw Fish

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, and raw canvas on canvas, 2017 16x20



The Act of Turning: Rotation

Arcylics, ink, charcoal, canvas scraps, and relief and screen prints collaged around modified canvas cube, 2016



Weight of Time
(The Dwelling Hours Each Day)

Arcylics, ink, canvas scraps, mylar, and relief, intaglio, and screen prints collaged around modified canvas cube, 2017



Iconographic Cube

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, and raw canvas around modified canvas cube, 2017



Stitch Surface Tapestry

Arcylics, ink, and relief canvas prints collaged around modified canvas cube, 2019



Surface Walking

Acrylics, ink, canvas scraps, raw canvas, and relief, intaglio, and screen prints collaged around modified canvas cube,
2018



A Collection of Masses



A Curated Studio

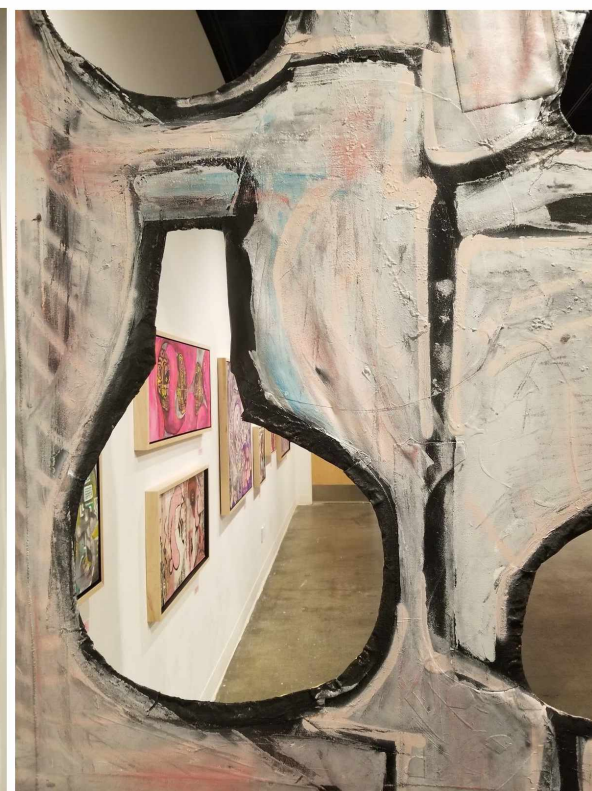
Studio objects, raw materials, plexiglass, and artist, 2019

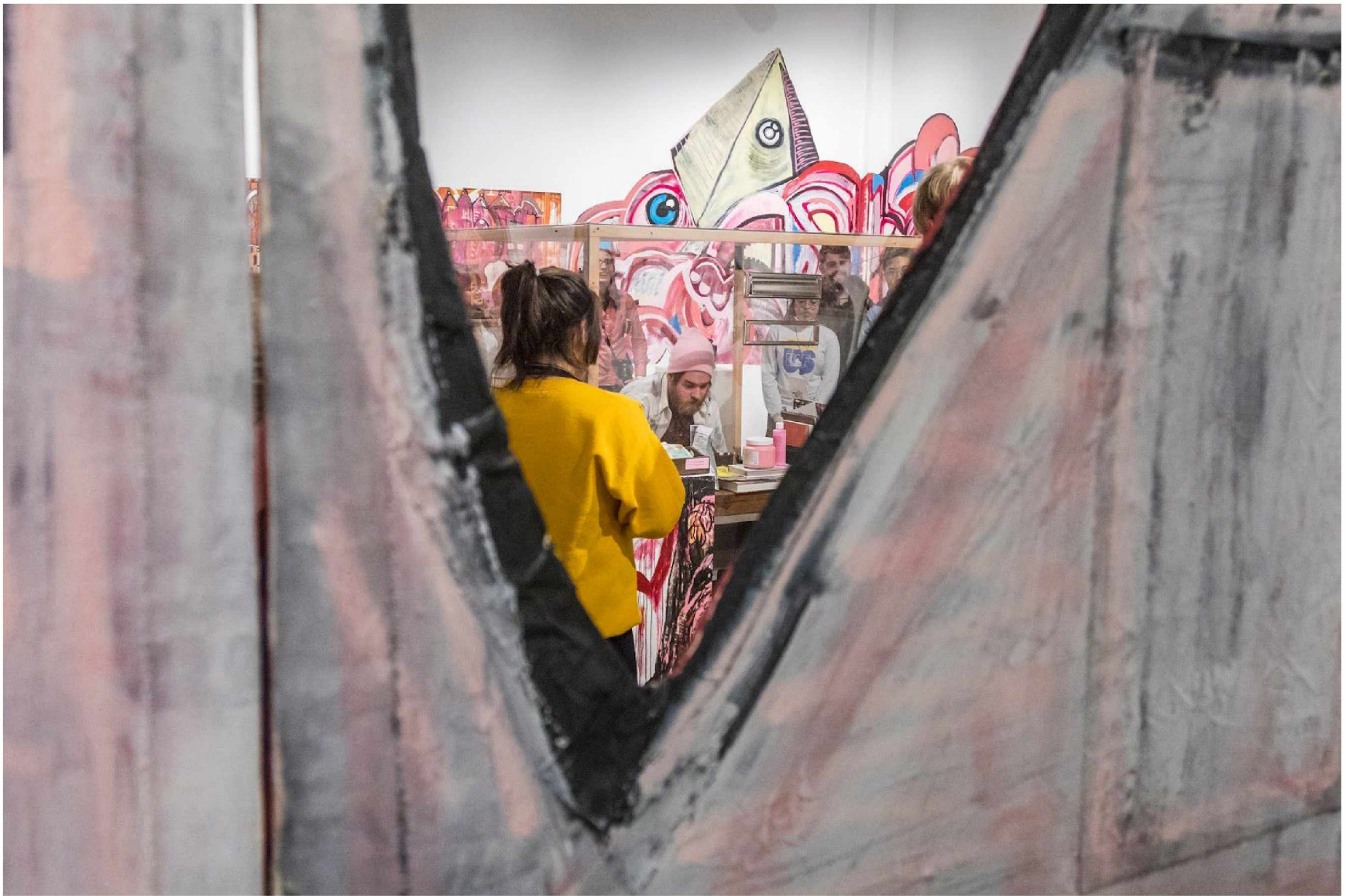






Gallery Barriers







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